

ONE HUNDRED FORTY-
NINTH ANNUAL

CONFERENCE

OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

HELD IN THE TABERNACLE
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

March 31, April 1, 1979

WITH REPORT OF DISCOURSES

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OFFICIAL REPORT
of the
ONE HUNDRED FORTY-NINTH
ANNUAL GENERAL CONFERENCE
of
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
held in the
Tabernacle on Temple Square
in
Salt Lake City, Utah
MARCH 31 - APRIL 1, 1979

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THE ONE HUNDRED FORTY-NINTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The 149th Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints convened in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, on Saturday, March 31, 1979, at 10:00 A.M.

The general sessions of the Conference were held at 10:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. on Saturday and Sunday, March 31, and April 1, 1979. The General Welfare Session was held in the Tabernacle on March 31, 1979, at 7:00 A.M. The General Priesthood Meeting was held in the Tabernacle on Saturday, March 31, 1979, at 7:00 P.M.

President Spencer W. Kimball presided at all sessions of the Conference and conducted the Saturday morning, Priesthood, and Sunday morning sessions. President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency, conducted the General Welfare and Sunday afternoon sessions. President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, conducted the Saturday afternoon session.

The proceedings of all sessions of the Conference were given extensive coverage in the United States and Canada, over many radio and television stations, coast to coast, originating with KSL in Salt Lake City.

By means of satellite transmission, sessions of the Conference were heard over radio in Mexico, Central and South America, Australia, the Philippines, Europe, Africa, and parts of Asia. Special transmission of the Saturday and Sunday morning sessions were carried by oceanic cable to members assembled in many chapels in England, France, Germany, Austria, Holland, Switzerland, Belgium, and Canada.

Rebroadcasts of all sessions of the Conference were sent by KSL Radio, Salt Lake City, and KIRO Radio, Seattle, Washington, to many parts of the United States and Canada, and the world, beginning at midnight following each conference day's proceedings.

This report of the Conference also includes the continuity of the Tabernacle Choir and Organ broadcast, over the Columbia Broadcasting System, on Sunday, from 9:30 A.M. to 10:00 A.M., immediately preceding the general conference session.

General Authorities Present

The following General Authorities of the Church attended one or more of the general sessions:

The First Presidency: Spencer W. Kimball, N. Eldon Tanner, Marion G. Romney.

The Quorum of the Twelve: Ezra Taft Benson, Mark E. Petersen, LeGrand Richards, Howard W. Hunter, Gordon B. Hinckley, Thomas S. Monson, Boyd K. Packer, Marvin J. Ashton, Bruce R. McConkie, L. Tom Perry, David B. Haight and James E. Faust.

Patriarch to the Church: Eldred G. Smith.

The First Quorum of the Seventy: *Presidents:* Franklin D. Richards, J. Thomas Fyans, A. Theodore Tuttle, Neal A. Maxwell, Marion D. Hanks, Paul H. Dunn, and Wm. Grant Bangerter. *Additional members:* Theodore M. Burton, Bernard P. Brockbank, Robert L. Simpson, O. Leslie Stone, Robert D. Hales, Adney Y. Komatsu, Joseph B. Wirthlin, Hartman Rector, Jr., Loren C. Dunn, Rex D. Pinegar,

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Gene R. Cook, Charles A. Didier, William R. Bradford, George P. Lee, Carlos E. Asay, M. Russell Ballard, Jr., John H. Groberg, Jacob de Jager, Vaughn J. Featherstone, Dean L. Larsen, Royden G. Derrick, Robert E. Wells, G. Homer Durham, James M. Paramore, Richard G. Scott, Hugh W. Pinnock, F. Enzo Busche, Yoshihiko Kikuchi, Ronald E. Poelman, Derek A. Cuthbert, Robert L. Backman, Rex C. Reeve, Sr., F. Burton Howard, Teddy E. Brewerton, and Jack H. Goaslind. *Emeritus members:* Joseph Anderson, William H. Bennett, James A. Cullimore, Sterling W. Sill, Henry D. Taylor, John H. Vandenberg, and S. Dilworth Young.

The Presiding Bishopric: Victor L. Brown, H. Burke Peterson, and J. Richard Clarke.

Other Authorities Present

Other authorities of the Church in attendance at the Conference included regional representatives, presidents of stakes, and their counselors, presidents of temples, bishoprics of wards, and presidencies and members of the Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood quorums.

Many auxiliary officers, general, stake and ward, were also in attendance.

FIRST DAY MORNING MEETING

FIRST SESSION

The opening session of the Conference convened in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, on Saturday, March 31, 1979, at 10:00 A.M., with President Spencer W. Kimball presiding and conducting.

The music for this session was provided by the Tabernacle Choir with Brother Jerold Ottley conducting, and Robert Cundick at the organ.

Before the commencement of the meeting, the Tabernacle Choir sang, "Glory to God on High."

President Kimball then made the following remarks:

President Spencer W. Kimball

We extend a cordial greeting to all assembled this morning in the Tabernacle on Temple Square, at the commencement of this, the first general session of the 149th Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We also welcome those seated in the overflow congregations in the Assembly Hall, and the Salt Palace,

and the many throughout the world who make up the unseen audience of radio and television.

The Tabernacle Choir has just rendered: "Glory to God on High."

Seated on the stand are all of the General Authorities of the Church except Elders Joseph B. Wirthlin and Yoshihiko Kikuchi who preside in the Assembly Hall; and Elders Rex D. Pinegar and F. Burton Howard who preside in the Salt Palace.

Present also are regional representatives, stake and temple presidencies, bishoprics, other general and local officers of the Church, and members of the Church from many foreign lands. We extend a special welcome to government, education, and civic leaders who are present.

The Tabernacle Choir, under the direction of Brother Jerold Ottley, with Brother Robert Cundick at the organ, will begin this session by singing, "Send Forth Thy Spirit."

Following the singing, the invocation will be offered by Elder Goerge P.

Lee, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The Tabernacle Choir sang, "Send Forth Thy Spirit."

Elder George P. Lee offered the invocation.

Following the invocation, the Choir sang without announcement, "Sing Unto God."

President Spencer W. Kimball

My beloved brethren and sisters, I greet you with the warmest feelings of love and gratitude at this, the opening of the divinely appointed world conference of the Lord's church—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

I send my blessings and solemn greetings to all the Saints and to our countless friends and investigators the world over. Also, I invite the honest in heart everywhere to join with us in worshipping our divine Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Church expansion

Since we last met in general conference here on Temple Square in Salt Lake City six months ago, we have witnessed much growth and expansion of the Lord's kingdom. We have opened a beautiful new temple in South America at Sao Paulo, Brazil, and have rededicated for the work of the Lord the temple in Logan, Utah, for the temple ordinances to be performed there.

Five other temples are in varying stages of construction, and more are in contemplation toward fulfilling the prediction of latter-day prophets that holy temples will dot this and other lands from end to end, where the work of the Lord is being firmly established.

Our missionary force is constantly growing and is now approximately 28,000 missionaries. We think that there are tens of thousands of brethren and sisters in the Wasatch

Front and elsewhere in the Church who could fill regular missions as worthy, able brethren and sisters if their bishops would call them on missions. We recognize that many of these missionaries are young men and young women, and it's a growing number always. They are spending two years of their lives in the mission field, in the most significant and unselfish volunteer service, to carry the message of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ to the nations of the world. These numbers are impressive, but we must not stop there. The need is ever greater, and more and more laborers are needed in the world.

We have established new missions covering almost all of the free world, and we are turning our attention more diligently now to one day sharing the gospel with our Father's children behind the so-called iron and bamboo curtains. We have need to prepare for that day. The urgency of that preparation weighs heavily upon us. That day may come with more swiftness than we realize.

Every year now we are adding approximately a hundred new stakes—the locally governed ecclesiastical units of Mormonism composed of several wards and branches each. Only a few weeks ago we created the thousandth such stake of Zion at Nauvoo, Illinois, a place of deep historical significance to the Church.

I rejoice with you, my brothers and sisters, in these statistical evi-

dences of the progress and growth throughout Zion. It is indeed progress to add new thousands of people to a membership now in excess of four million. It is pleasing to build the temples and places of worship in so many lands and to add thousands of students to our expanding educational and training programs for both youth and adults.

We are happy to see the further expansion of our vast Church Welfare program, with new bishops' storehouses and production units for relief of the poor. The Savior has commanded and charged us with the care of the poor among us since the very earliest days of the Church—even to the directing of the ways in which the responsibility should be discharged—a program which has always stressed the independence of the individual by helping provide work opportunities and guiding lines for those who need rehabilitation. We feel very happy with this growth and all other growth that is being displayed in the Church in all the lands where we go.

Each of our quorums of the priesthood has increased steadily in membership, as also have our auxiliaries working especially among the children, the youth, and the women of the Church.

In all of this evidence of progress, there is cause for rejoicing, but unfortunately we cannot proclaim that "all is well in Zion." We find that we Latter-day Saints are also vulnerable to the destructive forces of evil that are all about us in this sick world. Of the greatest concern in this day are those evils which tear at the fabric of the home and family.

Beautification encouraged.

Often we have called upon our people, and we repeat it again, to give attention to the outward appearance of their homes and buildings, the barns, the sheds, the fences, the

places of business, to make our communities attractive and desirable. We have asked, and repeat it again and again, that you plant trees and shrubs and vegetables and berry gardens to beautify your properties and help provide for your needs. Your response to these appeals has been gratifying, and many letters have been received telling of your cooperation in these matters, and we are very proud of you.

Don't stop. Continue on. But while we would encourage you to continue to give attention to the outward appearance of your homes, we now implore you to give more and more attention to the *interior* of your homes. I do not refer alone to the cleanliness and attractiveness of the home and furnishings, as important as these may be, but to the cleanliness and godliness of the family members and to the general atmosphere that prevails.

Train children

The Church's long-standing concern for children and its massive commitment in time and energy and resources to improve their lot are well-documented. We are constantly seeking ways to strengthen families and bless children, and that commitment will be continued and reinforced this year and in all the years to come.

The Church welcomes the concerns of others to achieve these beneficial ends through appropriate means. We again are reemphasizing, however, that the greatest blessing we can give our own children and that can be extended to all the children of the world will come through the simple processes of teaching and training them in the way of the Lord.

Home life, proper teaching in the home, parental guidance and leadership—these are the panacea for the ailments of the world and its chil-

dren. They are the cure for spiritual and emotional diseases and the remedy for its problems. Parents should not leave the training of children to others.

There seems to be a growing tendency to shift this responsibility from the home to outside influences such as the school and the church, and of greater concern, to various child-care agencies and institutions. Important as these outward influences may be, they never can adequately take the place of the influence of the mother and the father. Constant training, constant vigilance, companionship, and being watchmen of our own children are necessary in order to keep our homes intact and to bless our children in the Lord's own way.

The Doctrine and Covenants makes it very clear. It is the responsibility of the parents to teach their children. All other agencies are secondary. If parents do not teach their children—their children—they will be held responsible.

Fortify homes

We need continually to fortify our homes and families and defend them against the onslaught of evils such as divorce, broken families, brutality, and abuse, especially of wives and children. We need to constantly guard against immorality, pornography, and sexual permissiveness that would destroy the purity of the family members, young and old.

Such evils are very real and very threatening. One has but to read the headlines of our newspapers and magazines to become frighteningly aware of the crumbling, destructive influences which surround us.

Perhaps I sound like an alarmist. If so, it is because I *am* alarmed. I am greatly concerned, and so are my Brethren in the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles and others of the General Authorities.

If we could but suggest you go home and lock these evils out by closing and bolting the windows and locking the doors of your homes securely, it would be a simple matter.

However, such security would be ineffective against the evils of which we speak. They come into our homes on ether waves by radio and the television screen. We find these evil forces almost everywhere we go. Exposure is almost constant. We track them into the home from the school, from the playground, from the theater, the office, and the marketplace. There are but few places we go in our everyday world where we can escape them.

What then must be our service? What must we do? We must be constantly alert to their evil presence in our homes and destroy them as we would the germs and filth of disease. We must hunt them from the closets of our minds, freeing ourselves of such worldliness, quenching the embers of wickedness before they become destructive flames. How do we do this?

If we would escape those deadly thrusts of the evil one and keep our homes and families free and solidly fortified against all destructive influences so rampant about us, we must have the help of the very founder and organizer of this family plan—the Creator himself. There is only one sure way and that is through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and being obedient to its profound and inspired teachings. Surely we must be made to realize that the purchase price of a family hearth free of such evil influences is the keeping of the commandments of God.

Honorable marriage

Marriage, *honorable* marriage, is ordained of God. He decreed that the basic unit of society should be the home and the family, and we

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must be warned that the false culture of the day is turning away from this God-ordained plan.

That the inspired plan was the Lord's is shown in his declarations to us:

"For behold," he says, "this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39).

In Hebrews we read this: "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4).

Thus our Lord, who "is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Morm. 9:9), has throughout all the ages reiterated these requirements of the adults who follow his ordained plan and sire and bear children.

Parental responsibility

The oft-quoted scriptures given in the early days of this gospel dispensation have been a basic instruction from the beginning of time and will continue to be until the end of time. He commands,

"And again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents" (D&C 68:25).

I would emphasize that eight years of age. We don't wait until they are young adults or till they are nearly grown to teach them these laws. They should know at eight or before eight all about baptism and about confirmation.

This command was to be a law unto the inhabitants of Zion, not a mere hope or suggestion. As the stakes of Zion now are spreading farther and farther among the in-

habitants of the earth in many lands, the responsibility becomes ever greater.

The Lord continues his advice to the parents in Zion, and he says, "And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord" (D&C 68:28).

We must realize that this commandment does not cover prayer only but all the doctrines of the Church and the whole way of life.

The command to teach the children seems to be of equal power with the command to sire and to bear children. "Multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28) was the directive given in the Garden of Eden.

Selfishness is an element that breaks and corrodes and destroys marriages as it destroys lives and all that is good. It is an act of extreme selfishness for a married couple to refuse to have children when they are able to do so. It is a crime next to murder itself to destroy and abort the fetus except for extreme reasons which would endanger the life of the mother.

As we have said on previous occasions, certainly our Heavenly Father is distressed with the increasing inroads among his children of such insidious sins as adultery and fornication and homosexuality, lesbianism, abortion, alcoholism, dishonesty, and crime generally, which threaten the total breakdown of the family and the home.

Marriage ordained of God

To our beloved young people we would say a few more things about the responsibility of marriage. When the selection of a life's companion is made and the time comes, our young people should marry in the holy temple and have their families; complete their education; establish themselves in a profitable, honorable and rewarding occupation; and give

themselves to their families, to the gospel, and to the Church.

What we are saying about eternal marriage is not my opinion only or the opinion of the leaders of the Church today. This is the word of God, which supersedes all other opinions.

There seems to be a growing trend against marriage from degenerate areas of the world and a very strong trend toward marriage without children. Naturally the next question is, "Why marry?" And the "anti-marriage revolution" comes into focus. Arguments are given that children are a burden, a tie, a responsibility. Many have convinced themselves that education, freedom from restraint and responsibility—that is the life. And unfortunately this benighted and destructive idea is taking hold of some of our own people.

Marriage is ordained of God. It is a necessary and delightful condition. It is the only true state, and the failure of many marriages does not change the rightness of marriage.

As we enter into an eternal marriage and seek to fortify our family unit against that which would destroy our celestial happiness, let us remember also that the Lord will not leave us alone to accomplish this task.

Prayer

The Lord has not promised us freedom from adversity or affliction. Instead, he has given us the avenue of communication known as prayer, whereby we might humble ourselves and seek his help and divine guidance, so that we could establish a house of prayer. I have previously said that they who reach down into the depths of life where, in the stillness, the voice of God has been heard, have the stabilizing power which carries them poised and serene through the hurricane of difficulties. President Harold B. Lee has said it

this way: "Just as a flood-lighted temple is more beautiful in a severe storm or in a heavy fog, so the gospel of Jesus Christ is more glorious in times of inward storm and of personal sorrow and tormenting conflict" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1965, p. 16).

There is a great need in the world today for prayer which can keep us in touch with God and keep open the channels of communication. None of us should get so busy in our lives that we cannot contemplate with prayer. Prayer is the passport to spiritual power.

Follow Jesus Christ

It seems that at no time in world history has there been a greater need for understanding and blending the wholesome and divine teachings of the Master into our lives and into all our dealings with our fellowmen. I say to everyone within the sound of my voice, "Do not fail the Lord." We must accept the truth that the gospel principles are not on trial but that we are. The teachings of Jesus as revealed through the ancient and modern prophets are constant and unchanging.

The history of man evidences that these teachings are true. The rise and fall of civilizations according to the alternating righteousness and wickedness of the peoples proclaim the need to hear and to heed the Savior's divine messages. We must prepare ourselves, both individually and as a church, to defend the gospel truths against a world steeped in atheism and godlessness. We must oppose the so-called intellectuals who reason that they have all the answers, and we must contend mightily with those whose lust for power and worldly gain destroy their sense of right and wrong.

As members of Christ's true church we must stand firm today and always for human rights and the dig-

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nity of man who is the literal offspring of God in the spirit. We cannot condone a separation of our religious beliefs from our daily living. Righteousness must prevail in our lives and in our homes.

It is a *must* that we develop a love for Christ and give full allegiance and service in the establishment of his kingdom. Being a good Christian means we must be a good citizen of our country, wherever we live. We must be respectful and honorable in all our relationships with our fellowmen. We must worship the Lord in truth and keep all of his commandments. We must seek for an enlarged capacity to influence the world toward a return to righteousness and a pure love of God.

May the Lord bless us all in our homes and families as we strive to

draw nearer to him and keep his commandments, I humbly pray, my beloved brothers and sisters, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Following President Kimball's address, the Tabernacle Choir sang the hymn, "How Gentle God's Commands," without announcement.

President Spencer W. Kimball

The Tabernacle Choir has rendered, "How Gentle God's Commands." We shall now hear from Elder Paul H. Dunn, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Paul H. Dunn

Millions throughout the world sustain President Kimball as a prophet of the Lord. We in the Church sing a very important hymn that says, "We thank thee, O God, for a prophet / To guide us in these latter days" (*Hymns*, no. 196). Prophets have done that throughout all of history. I testify to you that Spencer Kimball really is a prophet.

Faces

For many years I have been a people-watcher. I love to watch people. They are interesting, fascinating. There is a sermon in every face. Faces! Smiling faces, frowning, angry, calm, unhappy, content. Faces! Round, square, oval, dimpled, beautiful, plain, striking, ordinary. Faces! Old and young.

Is there anything quite so revealing as a boy's face at his birthday

party, the faces of a young couple just engaged, of new parents with their first child, of a proud mom and dad at their son or daughter's graduation, of a husband and wife on their golden wedding anniversary?

Is there anything quite so funny as the face of a six-year-old with bubble gum exploded from ear to ear, a forgetful girl with two dates for the same night, a young bride who innocently cooks the peas in the pod, a parent who calls every name in the house before finding the right one, grandpa without his teeth?

And finally, is there anything quite so touching as the face of a teenager alone in a new school, a couple upon the death of their first child, parents worried sick over a wayward child, old people unvisited, a child in prayer?

Faces! They reveal so much! They tell a story. Speaking of faces,

let me just share a little experience with you.

"Because I have a father"

One day I was taping a radio program that was just a series of chats with little children. We had five or six children come down to the studio, and they were all dressed up in their bandbox best. I just started talking to them, one at a time. We were hoping to catch some snatch of conversation that would be good for the broadcast. The first one was a little five-year-old, and as she came in, I put her on my lap. I said to her, "Tell me, do you like to go to church?"

"Nope."

I said, "Why not?"

"Too boring."

I lifted her off and said, "Next."

I didn't think that we ought to air that family secret. I talked to two or three other children, and finally the door opened and a little toddler came in, cute as a button, in a freshly ironed dress. You know what her mother must have put her through to get her ready to come down to the studio. What an innocent face! I picked her up and said, "Well, who are you?"

She said, "Cory."

I said, "How old are you, Cory?"

She raised three fingers. "Three."

By now I was out of questions, so I said, "Do you know how to sing?"

"Uh-huh."

"Would you sing for me?"

"Uh-huh."

Without any prompting she commenced to sing a medley of Primary songs, ending with "I Am a Child of God." I don't know what that does to you, but I'm kind of tender. I looked through the window, and the engineer was even pushing

back a tear or two himself.

Then I said, "Well, Cory, you sing like you know God."

"Uh-huh."

I said, "How would a three-year-old know God?"

She looked at me, and I'll never forget her answer.

She said, "Because I have a father."

And I thought, "Oh, the power of a father in the home!"

I said, "Do you know Jesus?"

"Uh-huh."

I said, "Who's Jesus?"

She said, "Our Elder Brother."

I said, "Do you love Jesus?"

"Uh-huh."

"Why do you love Jesus?"

She responded, "Because of what he did for us."

I said, "What did Jesus do for us?"

She came right back and said, "He died for us."

I said, "Why would he do that?"

And she looked at me as if to say, "Well, don't you know?" She said, "So you and I will live again."

And I thought, what marvelous insight.

Simple faith

Isn't it amazing how people can know at three what they can't understand at thirty-three or fifty-three? What she was saying is that God the Father has not forgotten us here in mortality. He has not removed himself to a far corner of the universe to watch our antics with indifference.

Many people, you know, believe that he's done just that. They can't believe that he could create a universe, people a world with billions of souls, and still care a whit what happens to a single individual with his small concerns. They can't believe that they're that important to anyone, let alone to the Creator of it all.

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May I tell you that I know that God lives, that he cares, and that he knows each one of us individually by name? Somewhere between youth and growing up many of us lose that simple faith of a child. Who puts out the light in our eyes and replaces it with the dull film through which most of us see the world and our place in it? Perhaps it is because our lives sometimes hold more frustration than we think we can bear. We get all caught up in the thick of thin things.

Coping with opposition

As one man said, "Sometimes I hear a great talk or read an inspirational book and I just really feel inspired. It seems that a stirring giant in me comes awake. But then I get a flat tire on the way to work or an unexpected bill I can't pay, or my children won't get off the phone, and somebody else gets the promotion at the office. My good intentions just fade away in the crunch of everyday life."

We are all the same way no matter who we are or where we live, no matter what our wealth or position in the world. We have just about all we can do to cope with each day. Oh, the pressures and frustrations may be small ones sometimes. We may have too much to do, we may feel unappreciated, we may lose a button off our coat, or just not be able to get above the mundane. It sometimes doesn't have to be a whole lot. But the accumulation of it all, day after day, just wears down our motor—like our neighbor's dishwasher that recently required a fifty-dollar repair job because a toothpick got into the works.

And for each of us there may be times when we have to cope with real tragedy, real opposition. There are those who lose a loved one who was the very light of their life. Health may deteriorate. There may

be some in this very listening audience who cannot make ends meet or get enough food to fill an aching stomach. I remember reading of a man who was a prisoner of war in Vietnam who did not sleep for months because he was in such pain from beriberi. The only rest he got was when the pain became so intense his body could not stand it any longer and he would lose consciousness. How do you cope with that?

Well, whether it's for small reasons or big ones, there are sometimes questions that enter our hearts: Could I have been more? Could I have done more? Is there some evasive, elusive happiness I've missed along the way? *How do I cope?*

And you know, the answer that men and women have found to those questions has given mankind its greatest moments because the message of the century is: God really lives. Jesus is the Christ. He has revealed himself in latter days, and he speaks to us through a prophet, such a one as we've heard this morning. Through modern prophets we can come to know the truth, the divine principles which help us live and adjust, which give meaning and direction to our lives. When these divine principles are applied, nothing can defeat us.

You can't cover up who you really are before His penetrating gaze. Whoever you are, however you are, he'll take you as you are if you are willing.

Do not give up

You remember that the Duke of Wellington was talking of the Battle of Waterloo when he said that it was not that the British soldiers were braver than the French soldiers. It was just that they were brave five minutes longer.

And in our struggles sometimes that's all it takes—to be brave five minutes longer, to try just a little

harder, to not give up on ourselves when everything seems to beg for our defeat.

I know a young man who is a quadraplegic. He has no use of his arms and legs, which have deteriorated without use. The only way he can get around is by lying on a specially designed cart which he steers with his chin. But what is most marvelous to me is that he won't quit. This young man often wears red socks on his useless feet. They are there like a badge of defiance against his handicap, a mark for everyone who sees him wheeling around which says, "Look at me! I won't give up."

I remember a great phrase I learned from my father some years ago. He said, "It matters not if you try and fail and try and fail again. It matters much if you try and fail and fail to try again."

How do you cope? I know a woman who is noted for her smile. Her good cheer is rarely daunted. I asked her how she managed it with all the irritations she has had in life, and she told me this: As a child she had been taking an important letter to her father, who stood just behind a barbed-wire fence. In her eagerness to get there she ran toward him and tripped, and she fell against the fence, cutting her face deeply from the forehead down through the cheek. It left a permanent scar, and the scar was mistaken for a frown and grouchiness. She said, "I couldn't have the world think I have nothing but a frown to give, so I had to smile that frown away."

You and I cannot give up, no matter what the size of our struggles. We were not meant to be fear-haunted and defeated nobodies. There is something deep in our hearts saying that we belong to something higher. And that something higher is an eternal family.

The Lord is willing to assist

We must remember too that our struggles here are not too trivial to interest the Lord. Those of you who follow the developments of astronomy know that lately there has been a big stir in the scientific community about a galaxy prosaically called NGC 1961. It seems this galaxy has ten times the mass of our own Milky Way and billions of young, hot stars. When we think that our Lord created all that and understands the immensities of space that only boggle our minds, we have difficulty believing that his interest could ever devolve on something as minute as our little pain or concerns.

But the record of Christ's life on earth certainly shows that he was not above caring for the human-size needs or fears of his earthly companions. Do you remember when Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, died? Both sisters rushed to meet Christ to tell him of their sorrow and find comfort. And as they met him, they said in turn, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (John 11:21, 32). Now, who would know better than Jesus Christ that there was to be a resurrection so that Lazarus would live again? He didn't just say to them, "Chin up, ladies. It's only a few years before you see your brother again." Instead the scriptures tell us, "Jesus wept" (John 11:35), wept in pure compassion for the pain and lack of understanding of his two friends. Then he hurried to the tomb and raised Lazarus from the dead.

Think, too, when Christ was preaching to the multitude and then performed the miracle of the fish and the loaves to feed the hungry masses. He wasn't responding then to something earthshaking or lofty. He saw the human need to be fed and he used his divine powers to meet that need.

Well, our frustrations and disappointments may be just pinpricks in the eternal scheme of things, but since they do not seem that way to us, they do not seem that way to the Lord. Quit thinking that tomorrow your problems will go away and life will begin in earnest. The Lord is waiting to help you cope today if you will lay your human-size needs at his divine feet. Pray in specifics about the problems, little or big, that impede your progress and dull your best dreams. Knock, seek, and you shall find the answer to your prayers. That I promise you because you really are his child. He will give you the comfort and the counsel that you need, the courage to lift up your head and face your todays with faith and hope.

You see, my bright-eyed, three-year-old friend was right all along. Why will you make it in today's world? Why will you be able to cope? Cory's answer was right: *"Because you have a Father,"* to which I testify, in the holy name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Following Elder Dunn's remarks,

the Choir sang "What Was Witnessed in the Heavens?" without announcement.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Elder Paul H. Dunn, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just spoken to us. He was followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing, "What Was Witnessed in the Heavens?"

The Choir and congregation will now join in singing, "I Stand All Amazed."

The congregation joined the Choir in singing the hymn, "I Stand All Amazed."

President Kimball

Elder G. Homer Durham, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will be our next speaker. Following Elder Durham, we shall hear from Elder L. Tom Perry, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder G. Homer Durham

If the Lord will grant me utterance, I desire to outline a basic required curriculum for the gospel-centered family of which President Kimball has spoken today.

When the family is in trouble, the world is disturbed. As the prophet has said, a major purpose of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is to strengthen the home. Home and family are the most important, the most influential institutions of society, educational as well as religious. Teachers, universities, and schools are important. But

more important are the homes from which professional teachers come. Classmates are influential. But more influential are the homes from which the classmates come. The restored Church proclaims that the family may be an eternal family. Gospel-centered family living helps us to reach these goals.

Educating children in the home

The education received by children in their first two years is vital. The attitudes, the sounds, the quality

of speech, the expression experienced, the reverence, kindness, the cruelty demonstrated in these critical years influence the future. The home may not be expert in plasma physics. We leave that to the universities. But it should be expert in teaching true self-identity as a child of God. The hymn declares, "Prayer is the simplest form of speech/That infant lips can try" (*Hymns*, no. 220). Such lips may later reap the blessings set forth in the book of Proverbs:

"Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles" (Prov. 21:23).

The educational testimony set forth in the opening lines of the Book of Mormon is challenging and instructive:

"I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, *therefore I was taught* somewhat in all the learning of my father; . . .

" . . . which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians" (1 Ne. 1:1-2; italics added).

"Therefore I was taught. . . ." Can our children record such a fact? The learning of the Jews included effort to engrave on the minds and hearts of children Moses' prophetic instructions from the book of Deuteronomy:

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

"And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way." (Deut. 6:5-7.)

In 1775 John Adams, designing a new nation in Philadelphia, wrote his wife Abigail of his concern for the nation's future leadership. She replied, "If we mean to have heroes, statesmen and philosophers, . . . we should have learned women"

(Quoted in Page Smith, *John Adams*, New York: Doubleday, 1962, vol. 1, pp. 221-22).

Which reminds me of the lines written by Clara Home Park of Draper, Utah, at the age of ninety-three:

*I've heard a lot of good things said
About what the Pilgrim fathers
did. . . .*

*I wonder who fed them and brought
them a drink,
Kept the children away when they
wanted to think.*

*It must have been strange with so
many others,*

*Not to have had any Pilgrim
mothers.*

What to teach children

What *shall* we teach our children? The Lord has outlined the basic curriculum, as the prophet quoted to us this morning, in section 68, verses 25 to 30. Let us examine this somewhat.

First, teach "*the doctrine of repentance*." To some the word may sound ominous, but none need shrink from it. It is the road to progress. The most glorious opportunities for true joy and happiness are found in this doctrine.

Second, teach "*faith in Christ the Son of the living God*." Children taught to have faith in him can follow his example in doing good to all. Such will serve well their fellow beings.

In his ten-volume study of history, Professor Arnold Toynbee has written that when a society begins to disintegrate, the following ways of behavior appear: people feel that the world is ruled by chance; vulgarity and barbarism in manners appear; traditional values are replaced by iconoclasm. People turn to various remedies: to the so-called creative genius, the sword, archaism, futurism, or to Plato's philosopher king. All these fail, says the record of his-

tory as read by Toynbee. And "a single figure arises from the flood and . . . fills the whole horizon" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947, abridgement of vols. 1-4, p. 547; see also abridgement of vols. 8-10, pp. 376-77). That figure is the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first lines written by Christopher Columbus in the journal of his first voyage are these: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Bjorn Landstrom, *Columbus*, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1967, p. 54). Thus begins that historic record. When Bartolome Las Casas, with the help of Columbus's son Ferdinand, abridged the journal, he recorded that when they landed on October 12, 1492, the admiral knelt and then rose and named the first landfall San Salvador, holy Savior—the first land named by the Europeans. (See Landstrom, p. 68.)

We proclaim faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the saving principle for mankind. That salvation begins with the instruction to children.

Third, teach *"baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands, when eight years old."* This provides entrance to the Church itself, a large family circle. The gift of the Holy Ghost follows as the means of leading us into all truth.

Section 68, verses 25 to 28, outlines required courses in the family curriculum. For "inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand" these things, the Lord has said "the sin be upon the heads of the parents."

Fourth, to make such teaching

effective, the Lord has said in this same section: *"Parents shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord."*

"And the inhabitants of Zion shall also observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy." (D&C 68:28-29.)

Fifth and finally, *diligent, intelligent industry* must be taught as the key to all this and to all achievement. All inhabitants of Zion are counseled in this section "to labor in all faithfulness" (D&C 68:30). Work habits are best taught at home.

Teach by example

I pray that fathers will magnify their callings as true priesthood leaders and by example teach love for these principles in their families. Mothers, cherish, love, encourage, teach respect, and inspire your children as only mothers can do. Joseph Smith was and remains a prophet. The Lord Jesus Christ lives as the Son of the Eternal Father and is the head of this, his restored church. President Spencer W. Kimball presides today as the Lord's living prophet. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Elder G. Homer Durham, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just addressed us.

Elder L. Tom Perry, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will now address us.

He will be followed by President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency.

Elder L. Tom Perry

I was on an airplane a few weeks ago on my way home. On the seat next to mine was a news magazine opened to an article which intrigued me. It was entitled "The Doubting American—A Growing Breed." (*U.S. News and World Report*, 26 Feb. 1979, p. 74). Its message was that belief, the energizer of progress and the cement of civilization since the dawn of history, is running into trouble. People no longer have confidence in their government leaders. They think business does not have the integrity it once had, and even more alarming, a survey indicated there is less feeling regarding their obligation to religion.

The conclusion to the questions asked on religion was that organized religion is not playing a central role in the religious lives of a sizable portion of the unchurched. Many feel that they can go it alone.

Then the article went on to point out that young people gave replies like: "Why should I do something for another person? We do not see anymore why we shouldn't steal, why we shouldn't commit adultery, why we should honor our mother and our father."

I would guess it would be only natural in a world beset by one major problem after another that fears and doubts would trouble the souls of mankind. How contrary, however, is the lesson of history that man within himself cannot solve his problems. How fallacious is the thinking that one can be a law unto himself. How wrong it is to believe each individual can establish his own moral code, standards for honesty, and principles to be governed by. I have not found in history the success of any peoples who attempted to live under such an order. In fact, history has recorded that those civilizations which have been able to establish a value standard, a central belief, a uniting to-

gether, have experienced the greatest progress.

Seek the Kingdom of God

The religious history of mankind has demonstrated the success of those peoples who were strong enough to follow a standard which was above those established just by man. From the very beginning prophets have been heard to encourage mankind to seek a higher kingdom, the kingdom of God. We find, in the early pages of the Book of Mormon, Nephi warning the people:

"And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God" (2 Ne. 9:23).

John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, preparing the way for the mission of our Savior on earth, cried to the people, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2).

As the Church was restored to the earth in this dispensation, the people were admonished to assist in building the kingdom of God here on earth in preparation for the return of our Lord and Savior, Brigham Young, addressing the Saints at Winter Quarters in 1847, said:

"The kingdom which we are establishing is not of this world, but is the kingdom of the Great God. It is the fruit of righteousness, of peace, of salvation to every soul that will receive it, from Adam down to his latest posterity. Our good will is towards all men, and we desire their salvation in time and eternity; and we will do them good so far as God will give us the power, and men will permit us the privilege. . . .

"Come, then, ye Saints; come,

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then, ye honorable men of the earth; come, then, ye wise, ye learned, ye rich, ye noble, according to the riches, and wisdom, and knowledge of the great Jehovah; from all nations, and kindreds, and kingdoms, and tongues, and people, and dialects on the face of the whole earth, and join the standard of Emanuel, and help us to build up the Kingdom of God, and establish the principles of truth, life, and salvation, and you shall receive your reward among the sanctified, when the Lord Jesus Christ cometh to make up his jewels; and no power on earth or in hell can prevail against you." (*Millennial Star*, 15 Mar. 1848, p. 87.)

Surely there would be an obvious difference between one who is attempting to conduct his life as though he were a citizen of the kingdom of God, and one who is conducting his life by the standards made by man. When a person determines to live a higher law, there should be a visible difference, a marked change in his appearance, his actions, the way he treats others, and the way he serves his fellowmen and his God. The scriptures are full of dramatic changes which occurred in the lives of individuals when they were converted to living the law of the Lord.

Alma the younger

There is a story in the Book of Mormon about the conflict that was occurring between those who wanted to believe and the unbelievers who were on the earth at that particular time. The scriptures record:

"And now it came to pass that the persecutions which were inflicted on the church by the unbelievers became so great that the church began to murmur, and complain to their leaders concerning the matter; and they did complain to Alma. And Alma laid the case before their king, Mosiah. . . .

"And it came to pass that king Mosiah sent a proclamation throughout the land round about that there should not any unbeliever persecute any of those who belonged to the church of God. . . ."

The sad part of the story is "The sons of Mosiah were numbered among the unbelievers; and also one of the sons of Alma was numbered among them, he being called Alma, after his father; nevertheless, he became a very wicked and an idolatrous man. And he was a man of many words, and did speak much flattery to the people; therefore he led many of the people to do after the manner of his iniquities.

"And he became a great hindrance to the prosperity of the church of God; stealing away the hearts of the people; causing much dissension among the people; giving a chance for the enemy of God to exercise his power over them.

"And now it came to pass . . . he was going about to destroy the church of God, for he did go about secretly with the sons of Mosiah seeking to destroy the church, and to lead astray the people of the Lord, contrary to the commandments of God, or even the king." (Mosiah 27:1-2, 8-10.)

As Alma the Younger was going about in rebellion, an angel of the Lord appeared to him and the sons of Mosiah, and spake as with a voice of thunder.

"And so great was their astonishment, that they fell to the earth." And then the angel commanded him, saying, "Alma, arise and stand forth, for why persecutest thou the church of God? For the Lord hath said: This is my church, and I will establish it; and nothing shall overthrow it, save it is the transgression of my people.

". . . Behold, the Lord hath heard the prayers of his people, and also the prayers of his servant, Alma, who is thy father; for he has prayed with much faith concerning thee that

thou mightest be brought to the knowledge of the truth; therefore, for this purpose have I come to convince thee of the power and authority of God, that the prayers of his servants might be answered according to their faith." (Mosiah 27:12-14.)

The appearance of the angel was so shocking to Alma the Younger that he became dumb. He could not open his mouth, he became so weak he could not move his hands or his legs, and the people had to carry him and lay him before his father and rehearse before him all the things that had happened. Alma's father rejoiced, for he knew the Lord had answered his prayers, and he caused the priests to assemble themselves together, and they fasted and prayed that Alma would again receive the use of his limbs and receive his speech. They fasted and prayed for the space of two days and two nights. After such a display of faith, Alma received his strength and stood up and began to speak to those assembled and said: "I have repented of my sins, and have been redeemed of the Lord; behold I am born of the Spirit,

"... Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters;

"And thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God." (Mosiah 27:24-26.)

Alma's life was changed. From this time forth the scriptures record that he went forth not to destroy the Church, but now to build it up, and he became a mighty leader in this land. Now we find him declaring:

"I know that which the Lord hath commanded me, and I glory in it. I do not glory of myself, but I glory in that which the Lord hath

commanded me; yea, and this is my glory, that perhaps I may be an instrument in the hands of God to bring some soul to repentance; and this is my joy." (Al. 29:9).

Obligated to keep God's commandments

Conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ brings a requirement to live according to a higher law. From there on we must conduct ourselves as citizens of His kingdom. President Stephen L. Richards once defined what these attributes would be. He stated:

"The attributes of Jesus are the standards of perfection in human living. Kindliness, sympathy, tolerance, mercy, forbearance, charity in judgment, loyalty, justice, integrity, and abiding love are Christian virtues that lie at the foundation of the idealism of the race. These and the incomparable concepts of the good neighbor, doing unto others as you would be done by, and the abundant life—losing one's self in the service of others that he may save it—are the soundest and truest philosophies in the society of men and the way to happiness." (*Where Is Wisdom?* Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1955, p. 324.)

We have the obligation when we accept the teachings of the gospel to demonstrate by our lives that we, indeed, keep God's commandments. We know His son, Jesus the Christ, stands at the head of this Church, and mankind has not been left alone to find the way by himself in a troubled world. There is great joy, satisfaction, and fulfillment in living God's law as He has declared it and will continue to declare it to His children here on the earth.

The scriptures have instructed us to set the example of living the higher law. Nephi declared:

"Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ,

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having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.

"And now, behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God." (2 Ne. 31:20-21.)

God lives. Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world. His kingdom will prevail. The greatest joy we can find on this earth is conforming our lives to His law.

This is my witness to you, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Following Elder Perry's remarks, the Tabernacle Choir sang the hymn, "Still, Still With Thee," without announcement.

President Spencer W. Kimball

The Tabernacle Choir has sung, "Still, Still With Thee."

We welcome those who have just joined us on television or radio for this, the first session of the 149th Annual Conference of the Church.

President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency, will now address us.

President N. Eldon Tanner

In 1896, about two years before I was born, Mr. R. M. Bryce Thomas from London, England, paid a visit to Salt Lake City, Utah, where he first learned about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Characteristics of the Church and its members

Following this visit, and after a thorough and searching investigation into the practices and doctrines of the Church, and a comparison of the teachings of the primitive Church of Jesus Christ which was established by Him, with his own church in England, he subsequently became a baptized member.

On May 24, 1897, in London, England, he penned an article which he entitled, "My Reasons for . . . Joining The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." In the preface to the first edition he stated:

"The object that I have had in

view in writing this article, explanatory of my reasons for leaving [my] church [in] England and joining the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is to comply as far as possible with the wishes of those of my relatives and friends who have expressed a desire to know something of the teachings of the Latter-day Saints, and also of the reasons which have led me to reject the faith of my fathers."

He concluded with this paragraph:

"In sending out the following pages then I would ask our Heavenly Father in the name of His Son, our Lord Jesus, to let His blessing rest upon what I have written so far as it may be in strict accordance with His truth, and with His holy word and will" (Liverpool, England: Millennial Star Office, 1897).

In a preface to the second American edition, December 9, 1904, we read:

"Since I penned the pages of this little work, however, I have paid two visits to Utah, and have become personally acquainted with the Latter-day Saints, in Salt Lake City, and in several other towns of that State. On the first of these visits I resided with two well known families of Saints, and obtained thereby the best possible opportunity of mixing freely in the society of this people, and of forming a just and correct estimate of them. . . . That they, in common with the rest of mankind, have their weaknesses and failings is only to be expected, and there will even be found some among them who can claim to be Latter-day Saints in a little else than name; but, taking the people as a whole, I have found them essentially God-fearing, honest, upright, with a firm faith in their Heavenly Father, strong in their testimonies regarding the divinity of the great latter-day work in which they are engaged, and in their belief of the great destiny which awaits them.

"Among the Saints, as among other Christian people, will be found educated and intelligent men and women. Education is a special feature with them, and it is by no means uncommon to find in this community, those who have studied, and those who are at the present time studying vocal and instrumental music and painting in the principal centers of art in Europe, and in the eastern parts of the United States. Musical talent seems to be decidedly conspicuous among them. Various important positions in the State, calling for such qualifications as education, intelligence, ability, and honesty, have been, and are now being filled by Latter-day Saints; while there are those who, having fully qualified themselves in the legal, medical, journalistic, and commercial professions, are following their various vocations with credit and profit to themselves, and advantage to the people of Utah.

"I am now paying my third visit to the capital city of that State, and see no reason to modify the opinion I formed of the Saints during my stay with them in 1901." (First preface, Salt Lake City: Bureau of Information and Church Literature, 1904.)

Without wishing to boast or give offense, but in all humility, and only to give an assessment of the benefits of the gospel in the lives of people, I venture to say that if Mr. Thomas were to visit Utah today, seventy-six years later, I believe that he would still see no reason to modify his opinion.

The Church still has the same organization, the same ideals and purposes, and its people are still motivated to become well educated, to serve efficiently and honestly in the various professions, in government, in industry, in their communities, and in their church, which has grown to the extent that now it is known as a worldwide church.

In 1897 when Bryce Thomas first wrote his article, there were only 37 stakes as compared with over 1,000 today, 18 missions as compared with over 160 missions today, and 222,334 members (that's less than a quarter million) as compared with over four million today.

Church organization and teachings

I quote again from the pamphlet: "I found that this people possessed a beautiful Temple and a very fine Tabernacle, with prettily laid out and well cared for grounds; their houses too were neat and picturesque, with nice gardens attached to them, while they could boast of a Tabernacle Choir . . . , the best that I have ever heard. Everything to do with this people appeared to be most excellently managed and looked after, while their missionaries were preaching the Gospel in most parts of the world, having gone out altogether at their own cost, and at a very great

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sacrifice of self in all cases. The Church organization of the Saints too appeared to be complete and effective. . . . I therefore decided to secure some of their books, especially the Book of Mormon, in order to learn more of their character and of their doctrines." (Thomas, first edition, p. 3.)

This he did, and his extensive study convinced him that there truly had been an apostasy from the Church as established by Jesus Christ. He states that he could not find a church which had the same organization and teachings of Jesus Christ as set forth in the Old and New Testament.

He was persuaded through his study that there was need for and was a prophet on the earth through whom the Lord could continue to send his revelations for the guidance of his people—that revelation from God to man had not ceased. He came to understand the importance and necessity of having the Holy Ghost through whom the gifts of the Spirit could be manifest.

He was impressed as he came to understand the prayer of Jesus as he prayed that all his children might be one, even as he and his Father in Heaven were one (see John 17:11). This is his comment:

"Now does it seem possible to suppose that this spirit of Unity, this Comforter, whom Jesus Christ was to send in order to show His followers how to grow like Him, and to guide them into all truth, can be guiding the numerous contending, discordant churches of Christendom, who exhibit such bitterness against each other, bitterness and hatred, which not so many years ago culminated even in the shedding of human blood!" (Thomas, first edition, p. 11.)

His search led him to discover that most of the churches had changed the ordinance of baptism by immersion, the form by which Jesus Christ and his disciples were bap-

tized, which is practiced in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Regarding infant baptism, he found there was no trace of such until the Third Century, and therefore it was not part of Christ's original church. He found it hard to accept a doctrine which taught that the sin of Adam was within little children, for he felt that an infant is perfect in Jesus Christ and has no sin of which to repent.

In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, children are not baptized until they are eight years of age, or the age of accountability.

Vicarious temple work

From the Bible Mr. Thomas learned that baptism for the dead was practiced in the primitive Church, but had been done away with in latter days. He found much evidence to support this doctrine which caused Paul to write in an epistle to the Corinthians:

"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?" (1 Cor. 15:29.)

Peter answered that question in these words:

"For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit" (1 Pet. 4:6).

We know by the scriptures that the gospel is preached to the dead and the dead are to be judged according to men in the flesh and live according to God in the spirit. Thus baptism is necessary for those who, during their lifetime, had not opportunity for this ordinance of baptism by immersion for the remission of sin.

Only in the Church of Jesus Christ do we find temple work which

is performed for the living and vicariously for the dead, who rely on us for the performance of this work on behalf of those who cannot do it for themselves, even as we relied on Christ to do for us what we could not do for ourselves.

The Lord has said, referring to baptism for our dead, "For we without them cannot be made perfect; neither can they without us be made perfect" (D&C 128:18).

God has provided the way to attain this perfection through genealogical and temple work so that we may trace our ancestry and link family to family back to Adam. This work is being done today in the temples of the Church and in fulfillment of the prophecy by Malachi, who said:

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:

"And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (Mal. 4:5-6.)

Apostasy and restoration

In view of all the evidence to show that the different churches which sprang up into existence following the death of Christ and his apostles had departed from the truth and changed the ordinances of the primitive Church, it is easy to understand and accept the fact that there was an apostasy, which had been predicted by Old and New Testament prophets.

During the period known as the Dark Ages, there was not a prophet on the earth to reveal the word of God to man, and there was even further departure from the true gospel and more changes in the ordinances as practiced in the original Church.

Eventually, as prophesied by John the Revelator, the gospel was restored to the earth through Joseph

Smith, who was chosen as a prophet and to whom were committed the keys of the Restoration and of the establishment of the Church on the earth in these, the latter days.

I invite you to read the story of Joseph Smith and of the personal appearance of God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, which is a new witness for Christ in America and a companion to the Bible.

Ezekiel refers to these two books as the Stick of Judah and the Stick of Joseph, and prophesies that they shall become one, meaning that they proclaim the same gospel and teach the same doctrines (see Ezek. 37:16-19).

Now let me summarize some of the reasons given by Mr. Thomas for joining the Church:

1. The moral character of the people as a whole, their faith in God, and their testimonies regarding the divinity of the work in which they were engaged.

2. The completeness and effectiveness of the Church organization, with the same ordinances as in the church established by Jesus Christ.

3. The restoration of the gospel following the Apostasy, and the need for a living prophet through whom God could continue to reveal his word for the guidance of his people.

4. Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, prohibition of infant baptism, and baptism for the dead, all of which were doctrines taught in Christ's original church.

5. Genealogical and temple work for the living and the dead, as referred to in the Old and New Testaments.

Testimonies of converts

Reasons given by converts who join the Church today are similar and so varied as to lead to the conclusion that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can supply the spir-

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itual as well as the temporal needs of any person who is seeking for the truth.

Let me share with you some personal testimonies and reasons for joining the Church.

In Florida a young couple was visiting different denominations and finally happened upon an LDS church, where they attended a meeting. They said:

"We found it to be different from any church we'd visited before. After having the lessons and going to church, we decided this was the church we'd been seeking all along." The mother stated that it was surprising to see what the children were learning about the Bible and Jesus Christ, the changes she noticed in their relating better to other children, and their helpfulness at home.

Family and home life also changed for them when her husband received the priesthood, which increased his self-confidence and desire to improve their family life and relationship.

A man in Ecuador met some missionaries on the street near his home and invited them in. They left tracts, pamphlets, and a copy of the Book of Mormon. He read them and liked them and later said of the missionaries:

"I liked their teachings. They taught me things my own church had never taught. I realized I had to live the commandments they told me about. The Word of Wisdom has given me a new life. I know it is of the Lord not to use tobacco, tea, coffee, or liquor. When the elders were teaching me, I knew I had to live it if I were to have a good life. The elders told me to pray about it; then they had to teach me how to pray."

In Finland a woman, lost and lonely following the death of her husband, was found by missionaries who answered some of her questions. She said:

"I was amazed at their answers.

They talked about a reunion with my husband. We had had a wonderful marriage, and I just couldn't think that it would end just like that. My minister had given me no answers, but those young missionaries told me a beautiful concept of eternal life. I listened in tears and wanted to hear more."

She studied and read the Book of Mormon, received a testimony, and was baptized.

A convert in England tells his story. Bitter over the death of an infant who had died without baptism and was therefore denied burial in the church cemetery, he was ready for the missionaries his wife had invited to his home. His first question was about the Church's teaching on infant baptism.

The elders cited a passage from the Book of Mormon which teaches that infants are incapable of sin and that they have no need of baptism because they are saved.

Then he made this comment: "It was the kind of doctrine Christ would teach. I simply couldn't see how a loving God could feel any other way about children. Then the elders gave me a lesson in obtaining a witness to gain a testimony. I put it to the test, prayed, and received a witness. I felt the burning in my bosom just as the scriptures described. I knew it was true."

He made this further comment: "One of the most joyous principles to me is celestial marriage. I feel that if people could understand this and really love their husband or wife, they would join the Church on this alone. It's a wonderful principle."

Finally, I will deal briefly with the conversion of a Protestant minister, who after much tribulation and persecution by ministers and friends when he decided to convert, gave the following testimony:

"I have written this in order to show that as in the Bible, when a man finds a 'pearl of great price,' he

will sell all that he has if necessary in order to obtain it [see Matt. 13:46]. I have found that peace and truth within the Mormon church for which I had been seeking for over twelve years.

"I have not quite completed my first reading of the Book of Mormon, but already the riches of its truths as set down by the Prophet Joseph Smith have become a vital part of our family's spiritual life. No man could have written this book except through the power of God. We accept the test of hatred through which we have passed as God's test of our sincerity in our seeking. . . .

"My prayer is that others will not continue to willfully blind their eyes, refusing even to read the Book of Mormon in order to learn. No man can read this book and not have his life changed. I have not overnight become an expert on the Mormon faith, but I am an eager student and am not afraid to learn what the Holy Spirit would teach through those to whom He has given the authority.

"My personal tragedy as a Protestant minister was that I wasted a good deal of valuable time trying to keep going an organization and institution which no longer, with any stretch of imagination, can be shown to be doing Christ's work."

Invitation to study scriptures

May I invite you all to study the scriptures, wherein are found the words of eternal life and the way to exaltation.

Jesus said, "This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39).

This is so important, that he gave his life for us that we may be resurrected, and he gave us the plan of life and salvation by which this may be accomplished. Read the

Bible and the Book of Mormon, which testify of the things which I have told you this day.

If you are searching for happiness in this life and eternal life with God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ hereafter, then I would exhort all of you to find the way, the truth, and the life, which is in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang "The Lord's Prayer" without announcement following President Tanner's address.

President Spencer W. Kimball

President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency, has just given the concluding address, followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing, "The Lord's Prayer."

We are grateful to the managers, and operators, of many television and radio stations, for offering their facilities, as a public service, to bring the proceedings of this Conference to a large audience, throughout many areas of the world.

We shall conclude this session of the Conference with the Tabernacle Choir singing, "Sing Praise To Him."

Following the singing, the benediction will be pronounced by Elder F. Enzo Busche, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and President of the Germany Munich Mission.

The Choir sang the number, "Sing Praise to Him."

Elder F. Enzo Busche pronounced the benediction.

FIRST DAY AFTERNOON MEETING

SECOND SESSION

The second session of the 149th Annual Conference began at 2:00 P.M., on Saturday, March 31, 1979.

President Spencer W. Kimball presided. Conducting was President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency.

Music for this session was furnished by the Brigham Young University combined chorus, directed by Ralph Woodward, with Roy M. Darley at the organ.

At the beginning of the session, President Romney made the following remarks:

President Marion G. Romney

President Spencer W. Kimball, who presides at this and all other sessions of the conference, has asked me to conduct this session.

We welcome all assembled in the historic Tabernacle on Temple Square in this, the Second Session, of the 149th Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We also welcome the many members and friends of the Church, tuned to these proceedings by radio and television. We note that there are overflow congregations in the Assembly Hall, where Elders Carlos E. Asay, and Teddy E. Brewerton preside; and in the Salt Palace, where Elders W. Grant Bangerter, and M. Russell Ballard preside.

We are pleased to acknowledge special guests present this afternoon, government and educational leaders, as well as regional representatives, stake and temple presidencies, patriarchs, bishops, and officers and members of the general boards and committees.

The proceedings of this conference will be carried extensively in the United States, and Canada, over many televi-

sion and radio stations, originating with KSL, in Salt Lake City.

Through satellite transmission, sessions of this conference will be heard over radio in countries of Central and South America, Mexico, Australia, Europe, and Africa.

We express our appreciation to the owners, and operators, of many radio and television stations, for their cooperation in making such an extensive coverage of this conference possible.

The General Priesthood Meeting, to be held this evening, will be transmitted over closed-circuit, from the Salt Lake Tabernacle, to men of the priesthood assembled in approximately 1,547 buildings throughout the United States and Canada, Puerto Rico, New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines, Korea, and Hong Kong; and by way of closed-circuit television to the Assembly Hall, Salt Palace, and to stake buildings in Salt Lake City, and on the Brigham Young University campus.

The music this afternoon will be provided by the Brigham Young University combined chorus, under the direction of Brother Ralph Woodward, with Brother Roy M. Darley at the organ.

The Chorus will begin this service by singing, "Sweet Is The Work."

The invocation will be offered by Elder Robert L. Simpson, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The chorus sang the hymn, "Sweet Is The Work."

Elder Robert L. Simpson offered the invocation.

President Romney

The chorus will now sing, "Ye Servants of God."

"Ye Servants of God" was rendered by the chours.

now present the statistical report of the Church for the year 1978.

Afterward, Elder Wilford G. Edling will read the auditor's report.

President Romney

Elder Francis M. Gibbons, Secretary to The First Presidency, will

Elder Francis M. Gibbons

For the information of the members of the Church, the First Presidency has issued the following statistical report concerning the growth and status of the Church as of December 31, 1978:

Church Units

Number of stakes of Zion 990
 Number of full-time missions 166
 Number of wards 6,731
 Number of independent branches in stakes 1,333
 Number of mission branches... 1,790
 Number of countries with organized wards or branches 60

(These statistics reflect an increase of 694 wards and branches during 1978.)

Church Membership

Total membership reported by stakes, missions, and Church offices at the close of 1978 4,160,000

Church Growth during 1978

Children blessed 97,000
 Children of record baptized... 63,000
 Converts baptized 152,000

(This convert baptism figure is an estimate based on 1978 reports received at Church headquarters prior to conference.)

Social Statistics

Birthrate per thousand 30.7

Number of persons married per thousand 13.1
 Death rate per thousand 4.1

Priesthood

Deacons 145,000
 Teachers 114,000
 Priests 211,000
 Elders 351,000
 Seventies 29,000
 High Priests 137,000
 (This represents an increase of 37,000 priesthood holders during 1978.)
 Full-time missionaries 27,669

Church School System

Total enrollment during the 1977-78 school year:
 Seminaries and institutes, including special programs 301,000
 Church schools, colleges, and continuing education 70,000

Welfare Services

Persons assisted with cash or commodities 111,500
 Persons assisted by LDS Social Services 18,000
 Persons placed in gainful employment 21,000
 Man-days of labor donated to Welfare Services 443,500
 Commodities distributed from storehouses (in pounds) 18,953,000

Genealogical Society

Names cleared in 1978 for temple ordinances 5,120,000
 The Genealogical Department is acquiring records in 43 countries and has a total of 983,000 one-hundred-foot rolls of microfilm, equivalent to 4,679,000 volumes of 300 pages each.

Temples

Number of endowments performed during 1978:
 For the living 50,400
 For the dead 3,756,600
 Temples in operation 16
 Temples planned or under construction 5
 Temples undergoing remodeling 1
 There were 204,900 more endowments done in 1978 than in 1977, even though one of the

temples was not in operation.

Prominent Members Who Passed Away during the Year

Elder Delbert L. Stapley, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles; Ida Jensen Romney, wife of President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency; Dr. Ernest L. Wilkinson, former president of Brigham Young University; President Rudolph H. Luckau, president of the New Zealand Wellington Mission; President Robert Austin Trump, president of the Centerville Utah South Stake; Raymond J. Pace, former member of the General Church Missionary Committee and Regional Representative; and Wendell B. Mendenhall, former chairman of the Church Building Committee.

Elder Wilford G. Edling

We have reviewed the annual financial report of the Church as of December 31, 1978, and operations for the year then ended. The financial statements and operations reviewed by the Committee include the general funds of the Church and of other controlled organizations, the accounts of which are maintained by the Financial Department of the Church. We have also examined the budgeting, accounting, and auditing procedures employed, and the manner in which funds are received and expenditures are controlled. We determined that expenditures of general Church funds were authorized by the First Presidency and by budgetary procedures. The budget is authorized by the Council on Disposition of Tithes, comprised of the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve, and the Presiding Bishopric. The Committee on Expenditures, in weekly meetings, administers the expenditure of funds under the budget.

Modern accounting technology and equipment are employed by the Financial and other departments in keeping abreast of rapid Church expansion and changing methods of electronic data processing. The Committee and the Law Department are conjointly giving continuous attention to matters relating to taxation of churches by the federal government, the states, and by foreign governments.

The Auditing Department, which is independent of all other departments, functions in the three-fold capacity of performing financial audits, operational audits, and audits of computer systems employed by the Church. These services are conducted on a continuous basis and include all Church departments, other Church-controlled organizations (the accounts of which are maintained in the Financial Department), and worldwide operations including missions, finan-

cial centers, and departmental activities conducted in foreign countries. The extent and scope of the Auditing Department in safeguarding the resources of the Church are increasing commensurate with the growth and widening activities of the Church. The audit of local funds of wards and stakes is assigned to stake auditors. Incorporated businesses, owned or controlled by the Church, for which accounts are not maintained in the Financial Department, are audited by professional auditing firms or by governmental regulatory agencies.

Based on our review of the annual financial report and other accounting data, and our study of the accounting and auditing methods by which financial operations are controlled, together with continuing discussions with personnel of the Financial, Auditing and Law departments, we are of the opinion that the

general funds of the Church, received and expended during the year 1978, have been properly accounted for in accordance with established procedures outlined herein.

Respectfully submitted,
CHURCH FINANCE
COMMITTEE
Wilford G. Edling
Harold H. Bennett
Weston E. Hamilton
David M. Kennedy
Warren E. Pugh

President Marion G. Romney

President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency, will now present the General Authorities, general officers, and general auxiliary officers of the Church for the sustaining vote of the Conference, following which Elder Mark E. Petersen, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our first speaker.

President N. Eldon Tanner

It is proposed that we sustain President Spencer W. Kimball as prophet, seer, and revelator, and President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. All in favor, please make it manifest. Contrary by the same sign.

Nathan Eldon Tanner as First Counselor in the First Presidency and Marion G. Romney as Second Counselor in the First Presidency. All in favor, please manifest it. Contrary by the same sign.

It is proposed that we sustain as President of the Council of the Twelve, Elder Ezra Taft Benson. All in favor, please manifest it. Those opposed by the same sign.

As the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: Ezra Taft Benson, Mark E. Petersen, LeGrand Richards, Howard W. Hunter, Gordon B. Hinckley,

Thomas S. Monson, Boyd K. Pack-
er, Marvin J. Ashton, Bruce R.
McConkie, L. Tom Perry, David B.
Haight, and James E. Faust. All in
favor, please manifest it. Contrary, if
there be any, by the same sign.

As Patriarch to the Church, El-
der Eldred G. Smith. All in favor,
please manifest it. Contrary, if there
be any, by the same sign.

The counselors in the First Pres-
idency, the Twelve Apostles, and the
Patriarch to the Church as prophets,
seers, and revelators. All in favor,
please manifest it. Contrary, if there
be any, by the same sign.

Spencer W. Kimball as trustee-in-
trust for The Church of Jesus
Christ of Latter-day Saints. All in
favor, please manifest it. Contrary, if
there be any, by the same sign.

As the Presidency of the First

Quorum of the Seventy, and as members of the First Quorum of the Seventy: Franklin D. Richards, J. Thomas Fyans, A. Theodore Tuttle, Neal A. Maxwell, Marion D. Hanks, Paul H. Dunn, W. Grant Bangerter. All in favor, please manifest it. Contrary, if there be any, by the same sign.

As additional members of the First Quorum of the Seventy: Theodore M. Burton, Bernard P. Brockbank, Robert L. Simpson, O. Leslie Stone, Robert D. Hales, Adney Y. Komatsu, Joseph B. Wirthlin, Hartman Rector, Jr., Loren C. Dunn, Rex D. Pinegar, Gene R. Cook, Charles A. Didier, William R. Bradford, George P. Lee, Carlos E. Asay, M. Russell Ballard, Jr., John H. Groberg, Jacob de Jager, Vaughn J. Featherstone, Dean L. Larsen, Royden G. Derrick, Robert E. Wells, G. Homer Durham, James M. Paramore, Richard G. Scott, Hugh W. Pinnock, F. Enzo Busche, Yoshihiko Kikuchi, Ronald E. Poelman, Derek A. Cuthbert, Robert L. Backman, Rex C. Reeve, Sr., F. Burton Howard, Teddy E. Brewerton, and Jack H. Goasling, Jr. As emeritus members of the First Quorum of the Seventy: Joseph Anderson, William H. Bennett, James A. Cullimore, Sterling W. Sill, Henry D. Taylor, John H. Vandenberg, and S. Dilworth Young. All in favor, please manifest it. Contrary, if there be any, by the same sign.

As the Presiding Bishopric: Victor L. Brown, Presiding Bishop; H. Burke Peterson, First Counselor; and J. Richard Clarke, Second Counselor. All in favor, please manifest it. Contrary, if there be any, by the same sign.

As Regional Representatives: All Regional Representatives as they are at present constituted.

The Relief Society: Barbara Bradshaw Smith, president; Marian Richards Boyer, first counselor; and Shirley Wilkes Thomas, second

counselor; with all members of the board as at present constituted.

The Sunday School: Russell M. Nelson, president; Joe J. Christensen, first counselor; William D. Oswald, second counselor; with all members of the board as at present constituted.

The Young Men: Neil D. Schaerrer, president; Graham W. Doxey, first counselor; Quinn G. McKay, second counselor; with all members of the board as at present constituted.

The Young Women: Elaine A. Cannon, president; Arlene B. Darger, first counselor; and Norma B. Smith, second counselor; with all members of the board as at present constituted.

The Primary Association: Naomi Maxfield Shumway, president; Colleen Bushman Lemmon, first counselor; and Dortha Lou Christiansen Murdock, second counselor; with all members of the board as at present constituted.

All in favor, please manifest it. Those opposed by the same sign.

The Church Board of Education: Spencer W. Kimball, N. Eldon Tanner, Marion G. Romney, Ezra Taft Benson, Gordon B. Hinckley, Thomas S. Monson, Boyd K. Packard, Marvin J. Ashton, Neal A. Maxwell, Marion D. Hanks, Victor L. Brown, and Barbara B. Smith. All in favor, please manifest it. Contrary, if any, by the same sign.

The Church Finance Committee: Wilford G. Edling, Harold H. Bennett, Weston E. Hamilton, David M. Kennedy, and Warren E. Pugh.

The Tabernacle Choir: Oakley S. Evans, president; Jerold D. Otley, conductor; Donald H. Ripplinger, associate conductor; Robert Cundick, Roy M. Darley, and John Longhurst, Tabernacle organists.

All in favor, please manifest it. Contrary, if there be any, by the same sign.

It seems, President Kimball, that the voting has been unanimous in favor of these officers and General Authorities.

President Marion G. Romney

Elder Mark E. Petersen, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles,

will be our first speaker.

He will be followed by Elder Howard W. Hunter, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Mark E. Petersen**Spring**

The spring of the year is a most welcome season. It is then that all life seems to renew itself, when the promise of the future appears brightest and hope rises to its zenith. Indeed it is a time of reawakened courage and confidence.

Spring! A time of renewal, a revival in nature of the life that is all about us, but especially a reaffirmation of the divine promise of life everlasting! It was spring when the Savior made it all possible by his atoning sacrifice and his resurrection.

It was in the spring when Jesus gathered his disciples about him and instituted the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a constant reminder of his crucifixion.

It was in the spring when he prayed so humbly in the garden as he set the divine example by saying, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39).

It was then also that he prayed so earnestly for his disciples, that they would be united as one in the heavenly cause, even as he and his Father are one (see John 17:11).

In the early part of still another year he said to his followers, "Be one; . . . if ye are not one ye are not mine" (D&C 38:27).

"Is Christ divided?"

This oneness, this unity of action and purpose, was vital to the work. There was no room for conflict among his disciples, no place for dissension, for as Paul demanded of the contending Corinthians, "Is Christ divided?" (1 Cor. 1:13).

When Jesus established his church nearly 2,000 years ago, it was in the hope that all mankind would come in a unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God unto a state of perfection, that we might become Christlike in reality (see Eph. 4:13).

But Christianity as we know it is not united. Among those who profess to believe in him there are wide differences, much conflict, contention, and even enmity at times, a thing which is utterly foreign to the humble prayer for unity which Jesus offered just before his crucifixion.

Well might we ask with the Apostle Paul, "Is Christ divided?" It was he who pleaded with the Corinthians as they drifted apart, "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10).

Paul named four subdivisions or separate denominations already existing in Corinth, a thing which he firmly condemned (see 1 Cor. 1:12-15). His former converts in that city actually began to alter the doctrines of Christ, even denying his resurrection (see 1 Cor. 15:12).

But this was not all. Division continued to develop throughout Christianity in that first century after Christ. Most of the epistles of the New Testament were written to combat it.

Paul reprimanded not only the Corinthians for their dissension, but

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First Day

also the Galatians, saying to them, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another" (Gal. 1:6-7).

He predicted dissension elsewhere when he said, "I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. . . , speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30).

Peter predicted the rise of false teachers, saying that "many shall follow their pernicious ways" (see 2 Pet. 2:1-2).

To Titus, Paul said, "There are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers" (Titus 1:10), and Jude wrote of mockers who even then walked "after their own ungodly lusts," separating themselves from the church of God (see Jude 18-19).

Early apostasy

This secession continued even beyond the time of the Apostles. Historians tell us that during the first century of Christianity at least thirty different contending factions arose, splitting the original Church into a confusion of discordant sectarian groups. There was no longer any unity in Christianity.

The names of some of the denominations which arose in that early time are—

The Judæo-Christians, who tried to Judaize the Christian religion by introducing Mosaic rituals, including circumcision.

The Millenarians.

The Encratites, who used water instead of wine for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

The Ebionites.

The Gnostics, who confused gospel truth by mixing it with Greek philosophy.

The Archontics, who believed in seven heavens, each one presided over by a prince; they also believed in the Supreme Mother of Heaven, a faith condemned in Jeremiah, chapters seven and forty-four.

The Copts, who are still prominent in Egypt.

The Syriac Christians, centered in Damascus, at that time one of the principal though paganistic cities in the Middle East.

The Mandacans, a baptist cult, who opposed the rise of sprinkling as a mode of baptism.

The Manichæans.

The Quartodecimans.

The Hellenists, and a number of others.

Within that same first century the apostles and prophets of Christianity ceased to exist, and the conflicting sects declared that they no longer needed either apostles and prophets or current revelation. To a large extent Greek scholarship and philosophy took their place. No other excuse could be found for the absence of those pillars of the Church.

They are not needed even now, it is said by those who claim that the Bible contains the full word of God. This is sad evidence of the spiritual darkness that come into the world.

Restoration of Christ's church

But a new day was predicted, a time when all that God had ever given in the past would be restored to earth. It was the Apostle Peter who made this prediction, saying that in the latter days all that was ever given through the prophets from the beginning of the world would be restored. (See Acts 3:21.)

So Christ's church was destined to come back to earth. But it would arrive in the midst of these denominational conflicts, which have continued to multiply even to our own day.

Signs of the true church

When it came, how could Christ's restored church be distinguished from all the existing denominations? How would it be recognized?

The scriptures clearly set forth definite marks of identification so that all who wish may avoid the confusion. Let us mention just a few of them.

The members of the true church anciently did not call themselves Christians, for that was but a nickname applied to them in derision by those who hated Christ. The members of the Church called themselves *saints*, as may be seen from various New Testament references (see Rom. 16:2; 1 Cor. 1:2), which are confirmed by Webster's dictionary and by the Bible scholars. This, then, is one of the identification marks of the true Church. The members are called *saints*.

Another important sign is that the Church would be guided by constant revelation through living prophets. Amos had said that the Lord will do nothing except through his authorized prophets (see Amos 3:7). The divine Church as restored, then, will be led by living seers and revelators receiving current direction from heaven.

Paul explained this to the Ephesians when he said that the whole Church rests upon a foundation of apostles and prophets with Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone (see Eph. 2:19-20).

He added that these apostles and prophets are to continue in the Church until we all become perfect (see Eph. 4:11-14; see also Matt. 5:48).

But prophets also were placed in the Church for the work of the ministry. This would include preaching of the word, of course, but also it would be for the selection of those who were to serve in the ministry.

Paul said that such persons must be called of God as was Aaron, who was chosen by current revelation through a living prophet (see Heb. 5:4; Ex. 28:1). Paul himself was called that way (see Acts 13:1-3). It is the divine pattern.

Then the Lord's true church may be further identified by the fact that its ministers are called of God as was Aaron, by current revelation given to a living prophet.

This brings up the matter of communication between the Lord and his church. How could he direct his people unless he spoke to them? Such communication would constitute current revelation and would be given only in the approved manner to living prophets ministering here on earth.

These are a few of the infallible signs of the true Church. But there are others. The Church of today must be of modern origin. Does that surprise you? Not an ancient church, but of modern origin. That is a vital sign of identification of the true church.

The Apostle Peter indicated that the Church will be restored before Christ's second coming (see Acts 3:19-21).

John the Revelator confirmed this when he said that the Restoration would occur in the hour of God's judgment, which could relate to none other than modern times (see Rev. 14:6-7).

The Savior spoke of the same thing, adding that after the gospel is finally preached abroad as a warning to the nations, then will the end come (see Matt. 24:14). That certainly indicates modern times.

New and additional scripture

Another vital sign of the true church is that it will produce new and additional scripture, in addition to the Bible, as was the case in ancient times.

The Bible is a compilation of

the books provided by ancient prophets, beginning with Moses, and then added to as each new prophet assumed his place in history. Thus the scripture became a growing thing. It was another pattern of the Lord.

That same pattern applied to New Testament times as well. Hence we have the Gospels and other scriptures of the New Testament. The Lord did not change his system.

Since the Lord is the same in all generations, the true church today also must provide new scripture in addition to the Bible.

There are various other signs of the true church too, but they are too numerous to mention in this short time. But let us say that no one isolated point can unerringly identify the Church. All the signs must be there, fitly joined together, as the Apostle Paul told the Corinthians (see 1 Cor. 1:10; see also Eph. 2:19-21; 4:11-16).

If we seek the divine church we must find in it all of these infallible marks of identification. If these signs are lacking, it is fair notice that we must look elsewhere.

Apostles and prophets

We Latter-day Saints testify that the Lord's divine church has been restored to earth as the scriptures say, that it is of modern origin, that it provides new revelation and additional scripture, and that it stands today, as anciently, upon a foundation of living apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ himself as the chief cornerstone.

All the signs of the divine church are here, not just a few. They are available to everyone for careful examination.

We spoke of spring, that time of resurgence of life and hope and joy. It was on a beautiful spring day in 1820 when the Almighty shattered the seal which had closed the heavens for centuries.

He descended to the earth in the state of New York and called a modern prophet, a youth as pure and unspoiled and as promising as the spring day itself.

This boy became a modern spokesman for God. Through him were all things restored as Peter said. And who was he? Joseph Smith, Jr., the seer and revelator of modern times. He labored humbly and completely under the direction of the Savior himself.

Christ is the Master. Joseph was his servant. Christ is the Redeemer and Messiah for whose coming we eagerly wait. Joseph was the messenger sent to prepare the way before him.

So now we have a new kind of springtime which is most significant, a heaven-sent springtime of world events, blossoming into a summer of resplendent spirituality.

The cold and dark winter without heavenly guidance, when the heavens were sealed over our heads, gives way to the springtime of new revelation, when Christ brought back to earth his truth and his Church.

New heavenly light has burst forth. A new day has dawned, a day of hope and truth which eventually will blend into a thousand years of Millennium and then on into eternal life in the kingdom of God.

From this tabernacle the modern prophets speak. Our great present-day prophet, President Spencer W. Kimball, this morning gave to you God's message for this present day, for the year 1979. He is the mouthpiece of God. He is the spokesman for God right now. So are his inspired counselors. So is the entire group of twelve inspired men, duly ordained as apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, also for today.

Testimony of God and Jesus Christ

Prophets of God and apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ minister again

on the earth. They are here now. They sit here before you. Unitedly and as one voice, they testify of him and for him. They testify to you and for you, and their testimony is true.

God is no longer a remote being; he is here among us by his Holy Spirit. The Savior is no mythical person. He is a great reality and he lives. He too is here among us by his ordained representatives, the apostles and prophets.

May we have the good sense to listen to these inspired men. May we be humble enough to accept their guidance.

May we accept the invitation of

the Savior to learn of him and to do so through the righteous men he has raised up today for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ. For this I humbly pray, in the sacred name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

President Marion G. Romney

Elder Mark E. Petersen, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us.

We shall now hear from Elder Howard W. Hunter, also a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Howard W. Hunter

President Wilford Woodruff

President Wilford Woodruff once had a remarkable experience to which I would like to refer. He first publicly mentioned the incident at general conference in October of 1880. Sixteen years later he gave further details in a discourse delivered at the Weber Stake conference, and his remarks were published in *The Deseret Weekly*. In the 1880 conference President Woodruff told of dreams he had after the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith in which he conversed with the Prophet many times. He then related another dream in which he talked with Brigham Young, and this is what he said about it:

"I saw Brother Brigham and Brother Heber ride in [a] carriage ahead of the carriage in which I rode when I was on my way to attend conference; and they were dressed in the most priestly robes. When we arrived at our destination I asked Prest. Young if he would preach to us. He said, 'No, I have finished my testimony in the flesh I shall not talk to this people any more. But (said he) I have come to see you; I have come

to watch over you, and to see what the people are doing. Then (said he) I want you to teach the people—and I want you to follow this counsel yourself—that they must labor and so live as to obtain the Holy Spirit, for without this you cannot build up the kingdom; without the spirit of God you are in danger of walking in the dark, and in danger of failing to accomplish your calling as apostles and as elders in the church and kingdom of God. And, said he, Brother Joseph taught me this principle.' " (*Journal of Discourses*, 21:318.)

President Woodruff then went on to say of that experience, as he spoke at the Weber Stake conference, essentially what I want to say today: "Every man and woman in this Church should labor to get that Spirit. We are surrounded by these evil spirits that are at war against God and against everything looking to the building up of the kingdom of God; and we need this Holy Spirit to enable us to overcome these influences." (*Deseret Weekly*, 7 Nov. 1896, p. 643.)

Missionary Experiences

Continuing his discourse, President Woodruff told of his missionary experiences. He said: "In the time of the apostasy in Kirtland . . . the Spirit of God said to me, 'You choose a partner and go straight to Fox Islands.' Well, I knew no more what was on Fox Islands than what was on Kolob. But the Lord told me to go, and I went. I chose Jonathan H. Hale, and he went with me. . . . Through the blessings of God I brought nearly a hundred from there up to Zion, at the time the Saints were driven out of Missouri into Illinois.

"So it has been all through my life. If I have undertaken to do anything, and the Lord has wanted me to do something else, He has had to tell me. When we were sent to England, we were sent by revelation. I went into the Staffordshire potteries with Brother Alfred Cordon. We were doing a splendid work, baptizing almost every night, and I thought it was the finest mission I ever was on. I went into the town of Hanley one night, and attended meeting in a large hall, which was filled to overflowing. The Spirit of the Lord came upon me and said that that was the last meeting I should hold with that people for many days. I told the people that that was the last meeting I should be with them. After the meeting, they asked me where I was going. I told them I did not know. In the morning I asked the Lord what He wanted of me. He merely said, 'Go to the south.' I got into the stage and rode eighty miles. The first man's house I stopped at was John Benbow's in Herefordshire. In half an hour after I entered the house I knew exactly why the Lord had sent me. There was a people there who had been praying for the ancient order of things. They were waiting for the Gospel as it was taught by Christ and His Apostles. The consequence

was, the first thirty days after I got there I baptized six hundred of those people. In eight month's labor in that country I brought eighteen hundred into the Church. Why? Because there was a people prepared for the Gospel, and the Lord sent me there to do that work. I have always had to give God the glory for everything good that has happened to me; for I have realized by what power it came." (*Deseret Weekly*, 7 Nov. 1896, p. 643.)

President Woodruff concludes with these words: "I refer to these things because I want you to get the same Spirit. All the Elders of Israel, whether abroad or at home, need that Spirit. . . . This is the Spirit that we must have to carry out the purposes of God on the earth. We need that more than any other gift. . . . We are in the midst of enemies, in the midst of darkness and temptation, and we need to be guided by the Spirit of God. We should pray to the Lord until we get the Comforter. This is what is promised to us when we are baptized. It is the spirit of light, of truth, and of revelation and can be with all of us at the same time." (*Deseret Weekly*, 7 Nov. 1896, p. 643.)

Developing spirituality

Developing spirituality and attuning ourselves to the highest influences of godliness is not an easy matter. It takes time and frequently involves a struggle. It will not happen by chance, but is accomplished only through deliberate effort and by calling upon God and keeping his commandments.

The Apostle Paul spent much of his life teaching and encouraging spirituality in the then far-flung missions of the world. He frequently used terminology from the sports, games, and athletic contests. He said that a Saint successfully keeping the commandments is like an athlete

winning his contest; that comparable degrees of training, exertion, obedience to the rules, self-discipline, and the will to win are involved. To the Corinthians he wrote words, which paraphrased, are to this effect: "You know (do you not?) that at the sports all the runners run the race, though only one wins the prize. Like them, run to win! Now every athlete goes into strict training. They do it to win a perishable wreath, but our wreath will last forever. For my part I run with a clear goal before me." (See 1 Cor. 9:24-26.)

Along this same line he said to Timothy, his beloved young friend and missionary companion:

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only; but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:7-8.)

Taking the athletic contest to what was in ancient times the ultimate experience—a hand-to-hand battle to the death—Paul wrote this statement regarding such physical combat:

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

"And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to

quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." (Eph. 6:11-18.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith did not speak in such athletic or military terms, but he has given us perhaps the clearest statement of all on the need to become spiritual as well as the time and patience which we must recognize are part of the process. The Prophet Joseph Smith said: "We consider that God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect; and that the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin; and like the ancients, arrives at that point of faith where he is wrapped in the power and glory of his Maker, and is caught up to dwell with Him. But we consider that this is a station to which no man ever arrived in a moment." (*History of the Church*, 2:8.)

Capitalize on our strengths

Part of our difficulty as we strive to acquire spirituality is the feeling that there is much to do and that we are falling far short. Perfection is something yet ahead for every one of us; but we can capitalize on our strengths, begin where we are, and seek after the happiness that can be found in pursuing the things of God. We should remember the Lord's counsel:

"Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out

of small things proceedeth that which is great.

"Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days." (D&C 64:33-34.)

It has always been encouraging to me that the Lord said it is the "willing and obedient [who] shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days." All of us can be willing and obedient. If the Lord had said the perfect shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days, I suppose some of us would be discouraged and give up.

The Prophet Joseph said, "Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God." (*History of the Church*, 5:134-35).

The place to begin is here. The time to start is now. The length of our stride need be but one step at a time. God, who has "designed our happiness," will lead us along even as little children, and we will by that process approach perfection.

Spiritual growth

None of us has attained perfection or the zenith of spiritual growth that is possible in mortality. Every person can and must make spiritual progress. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the divine plan for that spiritual growth eternally. It is more than a code of ethics. It is more than an ideal social order. It is more than positive thinking about self-improvement and determination. The gospel is the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ with his priesthood and sustenance and with the Holy Spirit. With faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to his gospel, a step at a time improving as we go,

pleading for strength, improving our attitudes and our ambitions, we will find ourselves successfully in the fold of the Good Shepherd. That will require discipline and training and exertion and strength. But as the Apostle Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Philip. 4:13).

A modern-day revelation makes this promise: "Put your trust in that Spirit which leadeth to do good—yea, to do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously; and this is my Spirit.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, I will impart unto you of my Spirit, which shall enlighten your mind, which shall fill your soul with joy;

"And then shall ye know, or by this shall you know, all things whatsoever you desire of me, which are pertaining unto things of righteousness, in faith believing in me that ye shall receive. (D&C 11:12-14.)

May we follow the counsel to so labor and so live as to obtain the Spirit of God, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Marion G. Romney

We have just listened to Elder Howard W. Hunter, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

The congregation and choir will now join in singing, "Redeemer of Israel." After the singing, Elder Royden G. Derrick, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will speak to us.

The congregation and chorus sang the hymn, "Redeemer of Israel."

President Romney

Elder Royden G. Derrick, a member of the First Quorum of the

Seventy, will now address us.

He will be followed by Elder Hartman Rector, Jr., a member of the

First Quorum of the Seventy, and President of the California San Diego Mission.

Elder Royden G. Derrick

Visit of Moroni

Those who believe in the Bible should not find it difficult to accept the experience related by the Prophet Joseph Smith concerning the visit of an ancient American prophet, Moroni. It happened on the evening of 21 September 1823, in Manchester, New York. Joseph Smith related:

"While I was thus in the act of calling upon God, I discovered a light appearing in my room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noonday, when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside, standing in the air, for his feet did not touch the floor.

"He had on a loose robe of most exquisite whiteness. . . . His hands were naked, and his arms also, a little above the wrist; so, also, were his feet naked, as were his legs, a little above the ankles. His head and neck were also bare. . . .

"Not only was his robe exceedingly white, but his whole person was glorious beyond description, and his countenance [was] truly like lightning. The room was exceedingly light, but not so very bright as immediately around his person. When I first looked upon him, I was afraid; but the fear soon left me." (Jos. Smith 2:30-32.)

In the conversation that ensued, Moroni instructed Joseph Smith regarding valuable records he had deposited in the earth fourteen centuries before. Among other things, he quoted from the book of Malachi, with some deviation as follows:

"Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah

the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

"... And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers. If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming." (Jos. Smith 2:38-39.)

How could the gravity of this important message be more dramatically emphasized? We should not dismiss it lightly. It places upon our shoulders a sacred responsibility.

Manifestation in Kirtland Temple

On 3 April 1836, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had a most glorious manifestation in the Kirtland Temple. The resurrected Christ appeared before them. Joseph Smith's description of the Savior on that occasion is one of the most precious of our scriptures (see D&C 110:2-3). Then Moses appeared and committed to them the keys of the gathering of Israel; then Elias, who committed the dispensation of the gospel; and finally, the prophet Elijah, who announced:

"The time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi—testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come—

"To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse" (D&C 110:14-15).

What glorious experiences these must have been as those of ancient days appeared and committed the

keys necessary to accomplish the work of salvation in these latter days.

From that day to this, the Saints, whenever circumstances permitted, and even when they didn't, have built temples, searched out their ancestors, prepared a genealogical record, and performed the necessary saving ordinances for their own salvation and that of their progenitors. This is the turning of the hearts of the children to the fathers, about which both Elijah and Malachi spoke.

Genealogical research

We have been given the responsibility by the Lord to do this work for all those who have passed on. Laws of privacy are such that we presently do temple work only for those who died beyond ninety-five years ago, except at the initiation of family members.

We estimate that there are available written records existing of the names and vital statistics of about 6 billion persons who died before A.D. 1900. Nearly all of those names are for people who lived between A.D. 1200 and 1900. Of these, we have microfilmed the records of about 1 billion and have completed the temple work for about 57 million. We estimate that there are 2.5 billion records of individuals available to acquire at this time, and another 2.5 billion that we anticipate will become available as the doors to other nations open to us. We are currently microfilming and storing in our vault 100 million additional names each year. Considering the value and perishability of these records, this is a great service not only to the Church but to the entire world.

For many years we relied mainly upon family and individual genealogical research for obtaining names for proxy temple work. Beyond a few close generations, gathering names by family genealogi-

cal research is slow and inefficient. For example, in a recent presentation, Elder J. Thomas Fyans estimated that he has as many as 348 third cousins who have the same second-great-grandfather (see *EN-SIGN*, Nov. 1978, p. 28). If each were to be searching for information on that same person, there would be untold duplication of effort.

We commend you, and all of those who have gone before, who have so diligently researched your ancestry. Your effort, your faith, and your diligence have established a solid foundation for this work to proceed. You have earned the reputation for the city in which our Church is headquartered as being the genealogical center of the world. This reputation you have built has opened doors for the work to expand that may have otherwise remained closed.

It is unlikely that we can accomplish the temple work that must be done if we continue to rely upon individual research alone. In recent years we have moved into the computer age. New technology is progressing rapidly. The time has come for us to take advantage of this remarkable mechanism which the Lord has made available to us.

Last year we announced the name extraction program. Stakes have set up units to extract names for use in the temples from microfilm furnished from our storage vaults. The progress has been gratifying. We are optimistic that improving technology will result in a further reduction of unit cost and effort to enable us to accomplish even more.

Role of members

Members have inquired as to what their role is *now* in fulfilling this charge given to us by the Lord through his prophets. Our answer is—

1. Complete your four-generation family group records and ped-

agree chart. Compare your records with those of your brothers and sisters to confirm accuracy. Then, just one of you forward one set of sheets, listing all brothers and sisters on the first line, to the Genealogical Department commencing 1 July 1979, and concluding 1 July 1981.

2. Perform temple ordinances regularly.

3. Participate in your stake name extraction program when invited to do so.

Now, there is one more to which we must give more attention than we have in the past:

4. Write personal and family histories.

The televising of the film series "Roots," and more recently "Roots II," has stirred an interest in personal and family histories that the experts believe is here to stay. One of the major television networks recently expressed this belief and with our cooperation has filmed a documentary on this subject. In 1980, our World Conference on Records will be oriented toward the writing of personal and family histories. This will give members of the Church and others the opportunity of learning how it can be done from experts the world over.

A royal family

Have you ever dreamed of belonging to a royal family? A royal family has the authority to be such—received from one who has a right to bestow such an honor. You likely have a person holding such a dignified honor right in your own home. The Apostle Peter, addressing the Saints of his day, said, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Pet. 2:9). Don't you have this same royal priesthood in your home?

A royal family is a family whose members are honest, true,

chaste, benevolent, virtuous, temperate, patient, charitable, humble, diligent, well read, and law-abiding. The Lord has cautioned, "But I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth" (D&C 93:40). He also instructed us, "And they shall . . . teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord" (D&C 68:28). He further said, "Seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith" (D&C 88:118).

A royal family is a family of well-disciplined parents and children who control their appetites. The Lord promises those who do so, "And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, . . . shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures" (D&C 89:18-19).

A royal family is a family that is exemplary. They set a pattern for other families to follow. The Savior said, speaking to his faithful followers:

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

"Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:14-16.)

Personal histories

A royal family is a family that has a heritage. Many of our Church families have a pioneer heritage. There are many other kinds of heritages inherited by other families of the Church of which they can be duly proud. In our society a heritage is best perpetuated by a family history. Family histories should be kept up to date by succeeding generations.

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In addition, each member of the family should keep a daily journal, and from that he can prepare a personal history. President Kimball kept a personal journal, and from that was written a personal history that has made a valuable contribution to the literature of the Church.

A personal history becomes a family treasure that enables children to emulate the virtues and personal characteristics of their forebears. Their forefathers become the David, the Samson, the Moses, and the Abraham of their lineage. Writing family and personal histories is becoming the popular thing to do. More and more people throughout the world are becoming interested in this exciting pastime to them, but sacred responsibility to us. The hearts of the children are indeed turning to the fathers.

A royal family is not necessarily confined to the political kingdoms ruling the nations of the world. You too can belong to a royal family. If you have not already done those things that will make it so, start

today, so that coming generations in your family will be faithful to those principles which characterize royalty in the kingdom of God. The self-discipline you exercise will enrich your life and the lives of your family members. That you may build this enrichment into your family to be perpetuated for generations to come, that we, indeed, may be a chosen people, a royal priesthood—yes, a royal family in the kingdom of God—so that the world will not be wasted as his coming, I pray. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Marion G. Romney

Elder Royden G. Derrick, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just addressed us.

Elder Hartman Rector, Jr., a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and President of the California San Diego Mission, will now speak to us.

He will be followed by President Ezra Taft Benson, President of the council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Hartman Rector, Jr.

It is an honor and privilege to greet you this day in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. His work of creation affects every one of us, and his work of redemption reaches everyone who has ever lived or will live on this earth.

He is the only man whose life on this earth was totally successful. Though he was tempted in all things like unto us, yet he lived without sin (see Heb. 4:15), and thus he made possible our victory over sin and death as well.

Follow Christ to victory

Since we, each of us, are invited to follow the Christ to victory,

it seems we should become vitally aware of how he fulfilled his mission, and seek to emulate his example. Surely we will never be able to do precisely what he did, partly, because his mission and purpose is different than ours. He is the Savior; we are the saved. He is the Mediator between God and man; we are those for whom he mediates. He is the Redeemer; we are the redeemed. The list of differences is long, and possibly endless. The Master's statement to Moses is a summation of his mission on earth: "My work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39). The immortality portion of this

mission he has already accomplished—the resurrection is a reality and *all* will partake.

However, we are permitted, encouraged, even commanded to assist in bringing to pass the eternal life of man, which is, of course, the continuing part of his great mission. His promise to us of things which I do, ye can do, and greater things than I do, ye can do (see John 14:12) rings loudly in the ears, stimulating the amazement of everyone who reads the holy scriptures.

As the scriptures are searched, the life of Christ seems to resolve into a great success formula. I'm sure that I have not caught the significance of all that he did and taught, but may I share five basic principles which have become discernible in my study?

Believe

1. *Believe you can do it.* This is the first important principle. All things are possible to them that believe (see Mark 9:23). Surely we must believe in a thing before we can desire it. And God does grant unto men according to their desire (see Al. 29:4). If the desire is strong enough, performance is assured.

This principle also includes believing in yourself. Self-esteem is vitally important to successful performance. Self-esteem is different than conceit—conceit is the weirdest disease in the world. It makes everyone sick except the one who has it. It is immensely important that you feel good about yourself. I am sure that you can only feel good about yourself if you are on the way to reaching your potential. I am positive also that no one can be emotionally or physically healthy unless he is keeping the commandments and rendering unto God the things that are God's. I did not say that this obedience would also make you satisfied with your every performance—I seldom am;

I'm sure I can improve my performance in the job. But when I'm on the Lord's side, keeping the basic commandments, I feel good about me, I esteem myself as a worthy child of God, and I find I am very positive.

How to perform positively? Easy: eliminate all negative words and phrases from your vocabulary. Refuse to *think* negatively, for as a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). Refuse also to *speak* negatively. Now you have become an optimist rather than a pessimist. There is a big difference between an optimist and a pessimist—one is positive, a believer; the other is negative, a doubter. The optimist, as you probably know, is a person who, when he wears out his shoes, just figures he's back on his feet. The pessimist says, "I'll believe it when I see it." The optimist says, "I'll see it when I believe it."

In a crisis the optimist takes action; the pessimist takes a seat. The Lord has given sufficient evidence to convince me that if you don't do it, you really didn't want it.

"Pray always, and be believing," saith the Lord (D&C 90:24).

Faith, the first principle of the gospel, begins with *belief*. What man can conceive, he can achieve. Believe you can do it.

Look to the Lord

2. *Look to the Lord for your blessings.* "There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—

"And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated" (D&C 131:20-21).

We quote that scripture, but all too often we don't seem to believe it. We seem to look to every other source first—to the national government, to the state, to our families, to

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our friends. In missionary work we look to the members to provide the necessary contacts to teach. I have had missionaries complain to me, "They didn't give me any contacts, so I had no one to teach." My response was, "Oh, is that so? Don't tell me you are going to let the Lord's work fail because they failed. Forget and forgive when *they* fail, but don't *you* fail. Work, tract, put in the hours. The Lord is the paymaster."

We should look to the Lord for our blessings because, among other reasons, he owns everything—the world and everything and everybody in it (see Ps. 24:1).

If you have no contacts to teach, go tracting or contacting in the shopping mall or on the street or wherever. Be where you should be when you should be there. When you are *where* you should be *when* you should be there, such conduct begets confidence—the members would like to have such competent missionaries teach their friends. I have had missionaries report, "President, we put in the contacting hours. We didn't get the contacts from tracting, but they came to us from completely unexpected sources. It's almost as though they fell out of the trees or the sky." Surely they came from the Lord. Look to the Lord for your blessings. He alone is the giver of every good and perfect gift (see James 1:17).

Sacrifice

3. *Make the sacrifice.* There is no such thing as "something for nothing" with the Lord. Blessings come because of obedience to the law upon which they are predicated (see D&C 130:21). The Lord requires sacrifice, meaning something above and beyond the minimum. The Master spoke of the "second mile" and told us to go there (see Matt. 5:41). Why? Because he wants to

bless us. So he put all the blessings in the second mile, but we must go where they are before we get them.

The first mile, we owe; that's what we are getting paid for. Recently I mentioned that to an elder who was hardly meeting the minimums. He responded, "Paid? I'm not getting paid."

I said, "Oh? You can breathe can't you?"

"Yes."

"You think you have that coming to you or something? King Benjamin says the Lord is preserving you from day to day by granting you breath—even supporting you from moment to moment" (see Mosiah 2:21). Do we ever thank the Lord for the fact we can breathe? No, not usually, until we get to where we can't breathe. Then we call upon him in a panic.

Another definition of sacrifice is that instead of endlessly doing what we want to do, we must do what the Lord wants us to do. Knowing that it is "sacrifice [that] brings forth the blessings of heaven" (*Hymns*, no. 147), then we should cheerfully do all things that lie in our power to bring to pass the Lord's work, even to "wast[ing] and wear[ing] out our lives" if that be necessary (D&C 123:13). Then we may "stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and for his arm to be revealed" (D&C 123:17).

Surely, in the work of the Lord, it is what we do after we think we have done enough that really counts with him, for that's when the blessings flow.

Lest you think this is my idea, may I quote to you what I consider the most important scripture in all of holy writ concerning service in the kingdom?

The Master said,

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your

bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." (Luke 6:38.) When the Master said, "Give, and it shall be given unto you," this means if you want to receive, you must first give. That's different from paying tithing where you receive and then give back ten percent. Here, the Master tells us to give first; then we shall receive. "Well, how *much* am I going to get?" (That's always the question, isn't it?) The Lord tells us how much. His words: "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over. . . ." Sounds pretty good, doesn't it? He continues, ". . . shall men give into your bosom." Men? I thought you said it was the *Lord*. Yes, it is the Lord, but he always uses men. If you pray for a revelation from the Lord, he will probably send you your bishop with the answer. You really don't need a visit from an angel so long as you have a bishop. The Lord continues, "For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

If you would have a blessing from the Lord, put something upon the altar. Make the sacrifice.

Miracles

4. *Expect a miracle.* All too often we really don't *expect* a miracle. We are not looking for it, and so don't recognize it when it comes. The Lord has commanded that we take the gospel to "every nation, kindred, tongue, and people" (D&C 77:8). So we pray for the Lord to cause a miracle which will break down those barriers that prohibit us from entering the nations where we are presently excluded. But are we, in fact, accelerating the preparation of our young men who should be ready to enter when the barriers fall? At the same time we must not overlook our need for help—the help we must have from the Lord—to hurdle

the hedge to our next-door neighbor.

The Lord has promised thousands of conversions. I fear we have no concept of what that means. At the very minimum it means that some stakes would need to baptize fifty or one hundred per week. It can be done—I know from experience—but it can never be done limiting the use of baptismal fonts to one night per week.

It can never be done if the membership wait for the missionaries to find, teach, and fellowship all the new converts.

Every member must be involved. Hear the word of the Lord through his prophet: "Father[s], you are to take the lead. . . . With your family, prayerfully select one or two families to friendship. Decide whom of your relatives [and] friends you will introduce to the Church. Perhaps you could plan a family home evening with them, on a night other than Monday, or participate together in any number of ways. Then, when these families show interest, arrange through your ward or branch mission leader to invite them and the missionaries into your home to share the message of the Restoration." (Spencer W. Kimball, *I Need A Friend: A Friendship Guide for Members of the Church* [pamphlet, 1977], p. 1.)

Do it! And I promise the miracle of conversion will take place in your home.

In the words of President Kimball, thousands of conversions can never become a reality so long as we wait "for the natural slow growth which comes with natural and easy proselyting." "Natural and easy" meaning we wait for someone to come and ask us about the Church.

Further, he has said, "Brethren, the spirit of our work must be *urgency*! (Quoted in Grant Von Harrison, *Missionary Guide*, 1977, p. 59). And we must imbue our missionaries and Saints with the spirit of *now*!

When the Lord said, "Lengthen your stride, quicken your pace, heighten your reach, widen your vision, and stretch your capacity," he was in reality saying "expect a miracle," for these are the stuff from which miracles are made.

The prophet says, "DO IT," and he indicates the time is NOW. And expect the miracle.

Be humble

5. *Receive the miracle with great humility.* Know that you didn't do it. It was done by the Lord. "And the glory be thine forever" (Moses 4:2). Oh, humility is so very, very important. Only if we have it can the Lord lead us. "Be thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers" (D&C 112:10).

Success this month is not a justification to stop and glory in our record, but should merely serve as an impetus to greater and more noble accomplishments next month in the Lord's name. For in the words of Nephi, "We know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do" (2 Ne. 25:23).
that we are saved, after all we can do" (2 Ne. 25:23).

Success formula

Then, in my estimation, the Master's great success formula for bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man is—

First, *believe* you can do it. The Master said, For this cause came I into the world: "to give his life [as] a

ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28).

Second, *look to the Lord for your blessings.* Again, the Master said, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5).

Third, *make the sacrifice.* The Lord's words: "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11).

Fourth, *expect a miracle.* The Lord said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (John 5:25).

And fifth, *receive the miracle with great humility.* "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do" (John 5:19). And "Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" (John 7:16).

I bear witness that this formula is effective in the Lord's work, and I am persuaded it works everywhere else too. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

President Marion G. Romney

Elder Hartman Rector, Jr., a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and President of the California San Diego Mission, has just spoken to us.

President Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our concluding speaker.

President Ezra Taft Benson

A day of sacrifice

My beloved brethren and sisters, humbly and gratefully I approach this sacred assignment with a prayer in my heart that what I say will strengthen our resolve to live the principle of sacrifice as a prerequisite to a godly life, for this is a day of sacrifice.

The Lord said in September 1831, "Now it is called today until the coming of the Son of Man, and verily it is a day of sacrifice . . . of my people" (D&C 64:23; italics added).

The Prophet Joseph Smith prepared this remarkable statement on the principle of sacrifice for the *Lectures on Faith*:

"Let us here observe, that a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation" (*Lectures on Faith*, 6:7).

Sacrifice of forefathers

As I have pondered this principle of the gospel, I contemplate a legacy of faith and sacrifice left by our forefathers.

I see father Abraham offering his son Isaac in sacrifice.

I see his great-grandson Joseph, though tempted severely in his youth, sacrificing the enticements of the world.

I see father Lehi, who left everything to come to this land of promise.

I see the founders of this republic, who pledged life, fortune, and sacred honor—some paying the pledge in full.

I see a modern Joseph sacrificing character, reputation, honor, applause, his good name, his home, lands, family, and finally his own life for the truth's sake.

I see the early pioneers who left lands, possessions, and community, to come to these mountain valleys.

I see the Son of God, who made the infinite, eternal sacrifice that we might, through our worthiness, live again with our Eternal Father.

Yes, as I contemplate the faith, devotion, and sacrifices of thousands—even tens of thousands—of faithful Saints who have preceded us, I am in complete accord with this statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith:

"It is in vain for persons to fancy to themselves that they are heirs with those . . . who have offered their all in sacrifice . . . unless they, in like manner, offer unto him the same sacrifice" (*Lectures on Faith*, 6:8; italics added).

I repeat: This is a day of sacrifice, and the opportunities are ever present. Today, I mention just four ways in which this principle may be practiced.

Deny ungodliness

First: *To sacrifice, deny yourself all ungodliness*. This applies to members and nonmembers alike, for we are all children of one Father, who desires us to become as He is. Moroni, a Book of Mormon prophet, described the way:

"Come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and *deny yourselves of all ungodliness*; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ" (Moro. 10:32; italics added).

The Savior himself declared: "Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and *come unto me* and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost,

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that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day" (3 Ne. 27:20; italics added).

To deny oneself of all ungodliness is to come to Christ by ordinances and covenants to repent of any sins which prevent the Spirit of the Lord from taking precedence in our lives. To deny oneself of all ungodliness is to "offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God. . . , even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit" (D&C 59:8).

It is a willingness to forgo personal bad habits such as tobacco, alcohol, profanity, an unruly temper, and immorality—habits which cause us, the children of God, to be less than our destiny.

I have known good men, decent men, both in and out of the Church who, because of some bad habit, prevented greater happiness and progress from occurring in their lives. One of these good men who saw the great merits of the Church, though he never joined, said to me on one occasion, with cigar in hand, "Ezra, what is your redeeming vice?" It was the first time I had ever heard such an expression. Brothers and sisters, from the Lord's view, there are *no* redeeming vices—only redeeming virtues!

If we haven't yet taken steps to come to Christ with broken hearts and contrite spirits, repenting of our sins, may we do so now. May our prayers contain the same sentiment of sacrifice expressed by an ancient Book of Mormon king who petitioned, "O God, . . . wilt thou make thyself known unto me, and I will *give away all my sins* to know thee" (AL 22:18; italics added).

Be willing to serve mission

Second: *To sacrifice, be willing to serve a mission.* Concerning serving a mission, President Kimball has said, "How selfish and thoughtless would it be for a young man to grow

to maturity, spend his time preparing for his life's work and his occupation and be unwilling to serve his Creator in this, the most important service in the world" (Regional Representatives' seminar, 30 Sept. 1977).

Too many of our young men have not yet decided to give two years of service to the Lord. I speak particularly to you young men who live in the United States and Canada, the host nations from which the gospel is to go to other nations. While you reap the benefits of prosperity unprecedented in the history of mankind, do you ever think that one of the reasons the Lord sent you to earth under such favorable circumstances is that you could use your talents, education, and money to bless others with the gospel?

Recently, while in South America to dedicate several countries and organize the first stakes in Bolivia and Paraguay, I visited the Missionary Training Center at Sao Paulo, Brazil. I was informed that most native South American young men who come to the training center do so at great sacrifice, having given their life's savings. Though the Missionary Department recommends that each young man bring at least six white shirts with him, most of these foreign-born missionaries, these sons of Lehi, bring one, possibly two. But they also bring to this service a great commitment and love for the Lord. And their blessings will exceed any sacrifice they have made. We can never get the Lord in debt to us.

Young men, this statement by President Kimball should be your personal motto: "Every LDS male who is worthy and able should fill a mission" (ENSIGN, May 1974, p. 87). We ask you to make the sacrifice. We call it that because of want for a better name for it. It's an investment. Enlist in this, the greatest service in the world. Do not evade the responsibility. Do not conscientiously object. We invite you to

join the army of 28,000 that is swelling in numbers each day. Your job will be to proclaim the message of the Restoration to the world. Know that you have our confidence and love. We expect you to perform that mission.

Temple marriage

Third: *To sacrifice, solemnize your marriage in the house of the Lord.* While in South America, I was touched by the sacrifices made by many of our Saints to have their families sealed to them for eternity. I shed tears of gratitude as I heard some of the experiences recounted.

One of our stake presidents brought his family to the Sao Paulo Temple from Lima, Peru, normally a nine-day bus ride, but, because of bus strikes and other problems, the journey took them fourteen days of travel.

Upon their arrival at Sao Paulo, the family went to the first session they could, and the sealing ceremony was performed. Then they immediately prepared to leave. The temple president asked them if they were staying the night. The father replied that the family had to leave immediately since they did not have sufficient money for lodging and food. He said they would have to travel several days without food as it was. The family was then persuaded to stay the night and have breakfast before their departure. That represents the spirit of sacrifice of many of our Saints worldwide.

Now, I want to speak frankly to you young men and young women of the Church. When you marry, your decision not *only* affects you, but your future children and generations after you. Every child born to Latter-day Saint parents deserves to be born *under the covenant* of temple blessings.

May I now tell you about something most sacred? Picture in your

mind a small room beautifully adorned—something akin to a lovely living room. In the center is an altar, covered with velvet and lace. Chairs line the walls of the room, where just family and closest friends may observe. With family observing, and a priesthood man of God officiating, you will be asked to kneel at the altar opposite your companion. You will be given instructions, and a benediction will be pronounced upon you. Then you will be sealed together as husband and wife for time and all eternity. You are given the same promise that Adam, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob received. Let me read it to you from the Doctrine and Covenants. Essentially you will receive, as the Lord said:

"Ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; . . . and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers. . . ; [Ye] shall pass by the angels, and the gods, . . . to [your] exaltation. . . , which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever" (D&C 132:19). Temple marriage is a gospel ordinance for exaltation.

Don't trifle away your happiness by an involvement with someone who cannot take you worthily to the temple. Make a decision now that this is the place where you will marry. To leave that decision until a romantic involvement develops is to take a risk, the importance of which you can't calculate now.

I would urge you further to pray about this matter. Obtain the testimony of the truth of these things before a romantic involvement can take root. Covenant with your Heavenly Father that you will do His will. Live a clean, moral life, and be worthy of His spirit to bless you.

No sacrifice is too great to have the blessings of an eternal marriage. To most of us, a temple is easily accessible, perhaps so conveniently that the blessing is taken too casually. As with other matters of faith-

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fulness in gospel living, being married the Lord's way takes a willingness to deny yourself ungodliness — worldliness — and a determination to do our Father's will. By this act of faith, we show our love to God and our regard for a posterity yet unborn. As our family is our greatest source of joy in this life, so it may well be in the eternity.

Service

Fourth: *To sacrifice, serve with your time and means to build the kingdom of God on earth.* The great law for spiritual happiness and progress was stated by the Master in these words:

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. (Matt. 16:24-25; italics added.)

Opportunities to lose oneself for the good of others present themselves daily: the mother who serves her children's needs; the father who gives his time for their instruction; parents who give up worldly pleasure for quality home life; children who care for their aged parents; home teaching service; visiting teaching; time for compassionate service; giving comfort to those who need strength; serving with diligence in Church callings; community and public service in the interest of preserving our freedoms; financial donations for tithes, fast offerings, support of missionaries, welfare, building and temple projects. Truly, the day of sacrifice is not past.

One of Satan's greatest tools is pride: to cause a man or a woman to center so much attention on self that he or she becomes insensitive to their Creator or fellow beings. It's a cause for discontent, divorce, teenage rebellion, family indebtedness, and most other problems we face.

If you would find yourself, learn to deny yourself for the blessing of others. Forget yourself and find someone who needs your service, and you will discover the secret to the happy, fulfilled life.

Sacrifice brings blessings

President Harold B. Lee said, "I [am] persuaded of one great truth: Whenever the Lord has a great blessing for one of his children, he puts that son or daughter in the way to make a great sacrifice." (In Conference Report, Apr. 1947, p. 50.)

Yes, I testify that sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven. This is "a day of sacrifice" for the people of the Lord!

I testify to you that this is a day of sacrifice, that it is part of the Lord's plan to bless us, His children. I pray we will do as the Psalmist exhorted — "offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put [our] trust in the Lord" (Psalm 4:5). In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Marion G. Romney

President Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has been our concluding speaker.

We remind the brethren of the General Priesthood Meeting, which will convene here in the Tabernacle this evening, at 7 P.M.

The Sunday morning session will be broadcast by many radio and television stations in the Western United States, and Canada, and by way of oceanic cable to members assembled in many chapels in England, France, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, and Austria.

KSL Radio, and KIRO Radio at Seattle, will rebroadcast sessions over extensive distances, beginning at midnight following each conference day's proceedings.

The nationwide CBS Radio Tabernacle Choir broadcast tomorrow morning will be from 9:30 to 10:00 A.M. Those desiring to attend this broadcast must be in their seats no later than 9:15 A.M.

The singing for this session has been furnished by the Brigham Young University combined chorus. We are grateful for the presence of you young people, and for the beautiful spirit your music has added to this meeting.

The chorus will now sing, in closing, "The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is

Burning." Following the singing, the benediction will be offered by Elder William R. Bradford, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and Supervisor of the Mexico-Central America Area.

The chorus sang the hymn, "The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning."

Elder William R. Bradford pronounced the benediction.

GENERAL PRIESTHOOD MEETING

THIRD SESSION

The General Priesthood Meeting convened in the Tabernacle at 7:00 P.M. on Saturday, March 31, 1979. President Spencer W. Kimball presided at, and conducted, this session.

The music for this session was furnished by a combined men's chorus from the Tabernacle Choir, and Mormon Youth Chorus, directed by Robert C. Bowden, and Donald H. Ripplinger, with Roy M. Darley at the organ.

President Kimball opened the meeting with the following remarks:

President Spencer W. Kimball

Beloved brethren, we are assembled in the General Priesthood Session of the 149th annual conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

These services are being relayed by closed-circuit transmission, and will reach members of the priesthood gathered in the Assembly Hall, and Salt Palace, and in approximately 1,547 locations in the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Puerto Rico, Australia, The Philippines, Korea, and Hong Kong.

We extend our greetings, and blessings, to all the priesthood members assembled here in the Tabernacle, or elsewhere. We commend all members of the priesthood who have made arrangements to participate in this important meeting.

We note that Elders Neal A. Maxwell and John H. Groberg are seated on the stand in the Assembly Hall; Elders Jacob de Jager and Richard G. Scott are seated on the stand in the Salt Palace; and Elders Bernard P. Brockbank and Jack H. Goaslind Jr. preside at the BYU Marriott Center.

The singing during this session will be furnished by the combined men from the Tabernacle Choir and Mormon Youth Chorus, under the direction of Brothers Donald H. Ripplinger and Robert C. Bowden, with Brother Roy M. Darley at the organ.

We would like to make this announcement before beginning: The area conference scheduled to be held in Houston, Texas, on June 14-15, 1979, has been postponed until June 23-24. Stake presidents and bishops should endeavor to advise those concerned of this change.

We shall begin this service by the

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Choir singing, "Open the Gates of the Temple." Following the singing, Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church, will offer the invocation.

The combined men's choir sang the anthem, "Open the Gates of the Temple." Elder Eldred G. Smith offered the invocation.

President Spencer W. Kimball

The Choir will now favor us with, "Come, Come Ye Saints," after which we shall be pleased to hear from Elder

Thomas S. Monson, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

The hymn, "Come, Come Ye Saints" was rendered by the choir.

President Kimball

Elder Thomas S. Monson, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our first speaker this evening.

Elder Franklin D. Richards, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will follow.

Elder Thomas S. Monson

Tonight I am aware that you, my brethren, represent the largest gathering of the priesthood ever to assemble. I pray for the help of our Heavenly Father, that he may grant me inspiration coupled with courage.

Some twenty-four years ago I was seated in the choir seats of the Assembly Hall situated to the south of us here on Temple Square. The setting was stake conference. Elder Joseph Fielding Smith and Elder Alma Sonne had been assigned to reorganize our stake presidency. The Aaronic Priesthood, including members of bishoprics, were providing the music for the conference. Those of us who served as bishops were singing along with our young men. As we concluded singing our first selection, Brother Smith stepped to the pulpit and announced the names of the new stake presidency. I am confident the other members of the presidency had been made aware of their callings, but I had not. After reading my name, Brother Smith announced, "If Brother Monson is willing to respond to this call we

shall be pleased to hear from him now." As I stood at the pulpit and gazed out on that sea of faces, I remembered the song we had just sung. Its title was "Have Courage, My Boy, to Say No." I selected as my acceptance theme "Have Courage, My Boy, to Say Yes." Such is the courage I seek this evening. age, My Boy, to Say Yes." Such is the courage I seek this evening.

A royal army

The words of a better-known hymn describe you:

*Behold! a royal army,
With banner, sword and shield,
Is marching forth to conquer,
On life's great battlefield;
Its ranks are filled with soldiers,
United, bold and strong,
Who follow their Commander,
And sing their joyful song:*

*Victory, victory,
Through him that redeemed us!
Victory, victory,*

Through Jesus Christ our Lord!
(Hymns, no. 7.)

The priesthood represents a mighty army of righteousness—even a royal army. We are led by a prophet of God. In supreme command is our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Our marching orders are clear. They are concise. Matthew describes our challenge in these words from the Master: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” (Matt. 28:19-20.) Did those early disciples listen to this divine command? Mark records, “And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them” (Mark 16:20).

The command to go has not been rescinded. Rather, it has been reemphasized. Today twenty-eight thousand missionaries are serving in response to the call. Additional thousands will soon respond. Nine new missions will be created in July, bringing the total number of missions to 175. What a thrilling and challenging time in which to live!

You who hold the Aaronic Priesthood and honor it have been reserved for this special period in history. The harvest truly is great. Let there be no mistake about it; the opportunity of a lifetime is yours. The blessings of eternity await you. How might you best respond? May I suggest you cultivate three virtues, namely—

1. A desire to serve.
2. The patience to prepare.
3. A willingness to labor.

By so doing, you will ever be found part of that royal army of the Lord. Let us consider, individually, each of these three virtues.

Desire to serve

First, a desire to serve. Remember the qualifying statement of the Master, “Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind” (D&C 64:34). A latter-day minister advised: “Until willingness overflows obligation, men fight as conscripts rather than following the flag as patriots. Duty is never worthily performed until it is performed by one who would gladly do more if only he could.”

Isn't it appropriate that you do not call yourselves to this work? Isn't it wise that your parents do not call you? Rather, you are called of God by prophecy and by revelation. Your call bears the signature of the President of the Church.

It was my privilege to serve for many years with President Spencer W. Kimball when he was chairman of the Missionary Executive Committee of the Church. Those never-to-be-forgotten missionary assignment meetings were filled with inspiration and occasionally interspersed with humor. Well do I remember the recommendation form for one prospective missionary on which the bishop had written: “This young man is very close to his mother. She wonders if he might be assigned to a mission close to home in California so that she can visit him on occasion and telephone him weekly.” As I read aloud this comment, I awaited from President Kimball the pronouncement of a designated assignment. I noticed a twinkle in his eye and a sweet smile cross his lips as he said, without additional comment, “Assign him to the Johannesburg South Africa Mission.”

Too numerous to mention are the many instances where a particular call proved providential. This I know—divine inspiration attends such sacred assignments. We, with you, acknowledge the truth stated so simply in the Doctrine and Cov-

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enants: "If ye have desires to serve God ye are called to the work" (D&C 4:3).

Preparation

Second, the patience to prepare. Preparation for a mission is not a spur-of-the-moment matter. It began before you can remember. Every class in Primary, Sunday School, seminary—each priesthood assignment—had a larger application. Silently, almost imperceptibly, a life was molded, a career commenced, a man made. Said the poet:

*Who touches a boy by the Master's
plan
Is shaping the course of a future
man.*

What a challenge is the calling to be an adviser to a quorum of boys. Advisers, do you really think about your opportunity? Do you ponder? Do you pray? Do you prepare? Do you prepare your boys?

As a boy of fifteen I was called to preside over a quorum of teachers. Our adviser was interested in us, and we knew it. One day he said to me, "Tom, you enjoy raising pigeons, don't you?"

I responded with a warm "Yes."

Then he proffered, "How would you like me to give you a pair of purebred Birmingham Roller pigeons?"

This time I answered, "Yes, sir!" You see, the pigeons I had were just the common variety trapped on the roof of the Grant Elementary School.

He invited me to come to his home the next evening. The next day was one of the longest in my young life. I was awaiting my adviser's return from work an hour before he arrived. He took me to his loft, which was in a small barn at the rear of his yard. As I looked at the most

beautiful pigeons I had yet seen, he said, "Select any male, and I will give you a female which is different from any other pigeon in the world." I made my selection. He then placed in my hand a tiny hen. I asked what made her so different. He responded, "Look carefully, and you'll notice that she has but one eye." Sure enough, one eye was missing, a cat having done the damage. "Take them home to your loft," he counseled. "Keep them in for about ten days and then turn them out to see if they will remain at your place."

I followed his instructions. Upon releasing them, the male pigeon strutted about the roof of the loft, then returned inside to eat. But the one-eyed female was gone in an instant. I called Harold, my adviser, and asked: "Did that one-eyed pigeon return to your loft?"

"Come on over," said he, "and we'll have a look."

As we walked from his kitchen door to the loft, my adviser commented, "Tom, you are the president of the teachers quorum." This I already knew. Then he added, "What are you going to do to activate Bob?"

I answered, "I'll have him at quorum meeting this week."

Then he reached up to a special nest and handed to me the one-eyed pigeon. "Keep her in a few days and try again." This I did, and once more she disappeared. Again the experience. "Come on over and we'll see if she returned here." Came the comment as we walked to the loft, "Congratulations on getting Bob to priesthood meeting. Now what are you and Bob going to do to activate Bill?"

"We'll have him there this week," I volunteered.

This experience was repeated over and over again. I was a grown man before I fully realized that, indeed, Harold, my adviser, had given me a special pigeon; the only bird in

his loft he knew would return every time she was released. It was his inspired way of having an ideal personal priesthood interview with the teachers quorum president every two weeks. I owe a lot to that one-eyed pigeon. I owe more to that quorum adviser. He had the patience to help me prepare for opportunities which lay ahead.

Willingness to labor

Third, a willingness to labor. Missionary work is difficult. It will tax your energies. It will strain your capacity. It will demand your best effort—frequently, a second effort. Remember, the race goeth “not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong” (Eccl. 9:11)—but to him who endures to the end. Determine to—

*Stick to your task till it sticks to you.
Beginners are many, but enders are few.*

*Honor, power, place and praise
Will always come to the one who stays.*

*Stick to your task till it sticks to you;
Bend at it, sweat at it, smile at it,
too—*

*For out of the bend and the sweat
and the smile*

*Will come life's victories after
awhile.*

During the final phases of World War II, I turned eighteen and was ordained an elder—one week before I departed for active duty with the Navy. A member of my ward bishopric was at the train station to bid me farewell. Just before train time, he placed in my hand a book which I hold before you tonight. Its title, the *Missionary Handbook*. I laughed and commented, “I’m not going on a mission.” He answered, “Take it anyway. It may come in handy.”

It did. During basic training our

company commander instructed us concerning how we might best pack our clothing in a large sea bag. He advised, “If you have a hard, rectangular object you can place in the bottom of the bag, your clothes will stay more firm.” I suddenly remembered just the right rectangular object—the *Missionary Handbook*. Thus it served for twelve weeks.

The night preceding our Christmas leave our thoughts were, as always, on home. The barracks were quiet. Suddenly I became aware that my buddy in the adjoining bunk—a Mormon boy, Leland Merrill—was moaning with pain. I asked, “What’s the matter, Merrill?”

He replied, “I’m sick. I’m really sick.”

I advised him to go to the base dispensary, but he answered knowingly that such a course would prevent him from being home for Christmas.

The hours lengthened; his groans grew louder. Then, in desperation, he whispered, “Monson, Monson, aren’t you an elder?” I acknowledged this to be so; whereupon he asked, “Give me a blessing.”

I became very much aware that I had never given a blessing. I had never received such a blessing; I had never witnessed a blessing being given. My prayer to God was a plea for help. The answer came: “Look in the bottom of the sea bag.” Thus, at 2 A.M. I emptied on the deck the contents of the bag. I then took to the night-light that hard, rectangular object, the *Missionary Handbook*, and read how one blesses the sick. With about sixty curious sailors looking on, I proceeded with the blessing. Before I could stow my gear, Leland Merrill was sleeping like a child.

The next morning Merrill smilingly turned to me and said, “Monson, I’m glad you hold the priesthood.” His gladness was only

surpassed by my gratitude.

Future missionaries, may our Heavenly Father bless you with a desire to serve, the patience to prepare, and a willingness to labor, that you and all who comprise this royal army of the Lord may merit his promise: "I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up." (D&C 84:88.)

This is my earnest and sincere prayer. I ask it humbly and in the

name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Elder Thomas S. Monson, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just addressed us.

We shall now hear from Elder Franklin D. Richards, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

He will be followed by President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency.

Elder Franklin D. Richards

My dear brethren, I rejoice with you in the wonderful spirit of this priesthood meeting.

I am grateful that my spirit was reserved to come to earth in the dispensation of the fulness of times, when the gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored, and when we have a prophet of God, our beloved President Spencer W. Kimball, to counsel us.

Work

Each of us is entitled to immortality through the atoning sacrifice of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, but in order to enjoy eternal life, we must work out our own salvation day by day.

What a marvelous philosophy—the gospel of work—eternal progression!

President David O. McKay said, "Let us . . . realize that the *privilege* to work is a gift, that [the] *power* to work is a blessing, that *love* [of] work is success" (*True to the Faith*, comp. Llewelyn R. McKay, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966, p. 287).

For the next few minutes I would like to direct my remarks particularly to my young friends of the

Aaronic Priesthood. You may not realize it, but when you are young you set the patterns that follow you throughout your entire life. It is so important that you set good patterns when you are young.

I am grateful that I had a father and mother who taught me as a boy the joy of work and the importance of paying my tithing and of spending less money than I made so that I could have something saved for my schooling and mission.

As a young boy, I raised chickens and sold eggs in the neighborhood, mowed lawns, worked in a warehouse and brickyard, and later sold printing. By working, I had my own money to spend, and I felt pretty grown-up. I paid my tithing, put some in a savings account for a mission and schooling, and the rest was mine to spend in any way I wanted to.

My parents taught me that tithing was a commandment of our Father in Heaven and a way for us to show our love for him and our appreciation for all the blessings he gives us. I still have a tithing receipt which was given to me when I was eight years old, and it is among my prized possessions.

The younger a boy is when he learns these important lessons, the more they become a part of his life. I am sure that many of the blessings I have enjoyed throughout my life have come to me because as a boy I learned the importance of working and being thrifty, paying my tithing, and putting something away for my mission and schooling.

When a young man goes on a mission or to school and pays some of the cost, he generally works harder and is happier and more successful.

Now, let me speak to you older priesthood bearers, as well as to the younger brethren.

Regardless of the difficulties existing in the world today, we as a people must recognize that we have been greatly blessed with the resources of this world. We, in effect, become stewards over our earthly possessions.

Throughout the history of the Church, the doctrine of personal and family preparedness has been emphasized by the leaders of the Church. Six phases of personal and family preparedness have been stressed by our leaders: education, career development, financial, health, and spiritual preparedness, and home production and storage.

In view of today's moral and social conditions, as well as unstable economic conditions in practically every country in the world, I have felt impressed to speak upon the importance of personal and family financial preparedness.

We must recognize that financial problems are the reason for much unhappiness and are certainly a major factor in family difficulties and divorce.

The Lord has told us that if we are prepared, we shall not fear (see D&C 38:30). What a blessing it is to be free from financial fear.

I would like to suggest a three-point formula to attain and maintain

financial preparedness:

1. Pay your tithes and offerings.
2. Get out of debt and stay out of debt.
3. Use your surplus funds wisely.

This formula is equally applicable to young and old. Let me discuss each of these three points briefly.

Pay tithes and offerings

First, pay your tithes and offerings. The Lord has said:

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. . . .

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Mal. 3:8-10.)

In this dispensation, the Lord has revealed to us that this is "a day of sacrifice, and a day for the tithing of my people" (D&C 64:23).

Brethren, compliance with the law of tithing opens the windows of heaven, bringing material and spiritual blessings through sacrifice and obedience. It is truly the first step towards personal and family financial preparedness.

As long as one is honest with the Lord, the amount of tithing paid is not material. The widow's or child's mite is as important and acceptable as the rich man's offerings.

When men, women, and children are honest with the Lord and pay their tithes and offerings, the Lord gives them wisdom whereby they can do as much or more with the remainder than they could if they had not been honest with the Lord. They are blessed and prospered in various ways—spiritually, physically, and mentally, as well as materially. I know this to be true, and I am sure

that many of you can bear such a testimony. And always remember the words of the Lord Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

Avoid debt

Now, the *second* point of the formula—*get out of debt and stay out of debt*. In modern revelation, the Lord has given us these commandments: "Verily I say unto you, concerning your debts—behold it is my will that you shall pay all your debts" (D&C 104:78). And again: "Pay the debt thou hast contracted. . . . Release thyself from bondage" (D&C 19:35).

President Joseph F. Smith advised the Saints to "get out of debt and keep out of debt, and then you will be financially as well as spiritually free" (In Conference Report, Oct. 1903, p. 5).

In getting out of debt and staying out of debt, there are certain basic principles that we, as individuals and families, can apply, such as:

1. Live within your income.
2. Prepare and use short- and long-term budgets.
3. Regularly save a part of your income.
4. Use your credit wisely, if it is necessary to use it at all. For example, a reasonable debt may be justified for the acquisition of a home or education.

5. Preserve and utilize your assets through appropriate tax and estate planning.

I know that by following these simple, basic principles it is possible to get out of debt and stay out of debt.

What will this mean to us as individuals and families?

President Heber J. Grant said, "If there is any one thing that will bring peace and contentment into the human heart, and into the family, it is to live within our means, and if

there is any one thing that is grinding, and discouraging and disheartening it is to have debts and obligations that one cannot meet" (*Relief Society Magazine*, May 1932, p. 302). Brethren, I can personally bear witness that this is true.

Use surplus funds wisely

The *third* point of the formula is to *use your surplus funds wisely*. In many respects, the real test of a man is his attitude towards his earthly possessions. A person who places earthly possessions in the scales against the things of God evidences little understanding of eternal values.

President Brigham Young had this to say about this matter:

"When this people are prepared to properly use the riches of this world for the building up of the kingdom of God, He is ready and willing to bestow them upon us. . . .

"I like to see men get rich by their industry, prudence, management and economy, and then devote it to the building up of the kingdom of God upon the earth" (*Journal of Discourses*, 11:114-15).

I personally feel very strongly that in furtherance of these teachings every man who has property and means should so live as to obtain wisdom to know how to use them in the best possible way to promote the welfare of his family and his fellowmen and in building the kingdom of God.

Testimony

I bear you my testimony that personal and family preparedness is vital to our eternal welfare and happiness, and it is important to be strong financially, as well as spiritually, mentally, and physically.

Yes, financial strength is realized by keeping God's commandments, by the payment of an honest tithe, by developing habits of work,

by being thrifty and living within one's income, as well as by using our means wisely.

May each of us this night commit ourselves to incorporate these great principles into our lives.

Brethren, how glorious it is to know that God lives and that Jesus is the Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, and also to know that the gospel in its fulness has been restored, together with the power to act in the name of God, through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and that there is a living prophet at the head

of the Church today, our beloved President Spencer W. Kimball. I pray that we may have the good judgment to follow his counsel. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Elder Franklin D. Richards, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has addressed us.

President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, will be our next speaker.

President Marion G. Romney

I would like to direct my remarks to the Aaronic Priesthood particularly. What I have to say I think would be applicable to all of us, however. I would like to start with Alma's testimony to his son. He testified "that whosoever shall put their trust in God shall be supported in their trials, and their troubles, and their afflictions, and shall be lifted up at the last day" (Al. 36:3).

Word of Wisdom

I plead with you young Aaronic Priesthood bearers—and all of us—to determine now, in your youth, to put your trust in the Lord, and by obeying his commandments learn the right to receive the specific blessings he has promised for specific types of living—those given in the Word of Wisdom, for example, when he said that "all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

"And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

"And shall run and not be

weary, and shall walk and not faint.

"And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them." (D&C 89:18-21.)

This reference to the destroying angel passing by the children of Israel refers to the occasion when, to persuade the Egyptians to let Israel go, "the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.

"... and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead." (Ex. 12:29-30.)

But in his death-dealing mission the destroying angel passed by the homes of those Israelites who had marked their door lintels and side posts with the blood of a lamb, as directed by the Lord.

It appears from the Word of Wisdom and other scriptures that there are destroying angels who have a work to do among the peoples of the earth in this last dispensation.

Saturday, March 31

First Day

The Lord told the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1831 that because all flesh was corrupted before him, and because the powers of darkness prevailed upon the earth, these angels were "waiting the great command to reap down the earth, to gather the tares that they [might] be burned" (D&C 38:12).

In 1894 President Woodruff said: "God has held the angels of destruction for many years, lest they should reap down the wheat with the tares. But I want to tell you now, that those angels have left the portals of heaven, and they stand over this people and this nation now, and are hovering over the earth waiting to pour out the judgments. And from this very day they shall be poured out. Calamities and troubles are increasing in the earth, and there is a meaning to these things." (*Improvement Era*, Oct. 1914, p. 1165.)

Now, my beloved brethren, in view of this revealed knowledge and understanding which the Lord has given concerning what is transpiring about us, is it not a glorious thing to have the assurance that if we will clothe ourselves with bodies purified through observance of the Word of Wisdom, these destroying angels will pass us by, as they did the children of Israel, and not slay us? Well, this is one of the blessings to follow observance of the Word of Wisdom.

Tithing

The promised blessings for obedience to the law of tithing are just as specific as are those for obedience to the Word of Wisdom. One of them has to do with the productivity of the soil. I remember being impressed with this thought many years ago as I listened to the remarks of Elder James E. Talmage, who was one of our great apostles when I was young. "Do you know," said he, "that the soil can be sanctified by the tithing of its products? The land

can be sanctified. There is a relationship between the elements and forces of nature, and the actions of men." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1929, p. 68.)

This statement is in harmony with the sentiments of President Brigham Young. "Talk about these rich valleys," said President Young, "why there is not another people on the earth that could have come here and lived. We prayed over the land, and dedicated it and the water, air and everything pertaining to them unto the Lord, and the smiles of Heaven rested on the land and it became productive." (*Journal of Discourses*, 12:288.)

Another reward for paying tithing sounds almost like crop insurance. Listen.

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house; and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

"And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the fields, saith the Lord of Hosts." (3 Ne. 24:10-11.)

President Grant's boundless faith that the Lord would prosper those who were liberal with their means in building his kingdom has had a distinct effect upon my life. Many years ago I heard him tell about attending a fast meeting at which his bishop made an appeal for donations. President Grant, though a very young man, had fifty dollars in his pocket which he intended to deposit in the bank. But he was so impressed by the bishop's appeal that he tendered the whole fifty dollars. The bishop took five dollars and handed him back the forty-five, stating that five dollars was his full share. President Grant replied, "Bishop Woolley, by

what right do you rob me of putting the Lord in my debt? Didn't you preach here today that the Lord rewards fourfold? My mother is a widow and she needs two hundred dollars."

"My boy," queried the bishop, "do you believe that if I take this other forty-five dollars you will get your two hundred dollars quicker?"

"Certainly," replied President Grant.

Here was a demonstration of faith which the bishop could not withstand. He took the remaining forty-five dollars.

President Grant testified that on his way from that fast meeting back to work, "an idea popped into" his head, acting upon which he made \$218.50. Speaking about this incident years later, he said, "Someone will say that it would have happened anyway.

"I do not think it would have happened. I do not think I would have got the idea, . . ." he said.

"I am a firm believer that the Lord opens up the windows of heaven when we do our duty financially and pours out blessings upon us of a spiritual nature, which are of far greater value than temporal things. But I believe He also gives us blessings of a temporal nature." (*Improvement Era*, Aug. 1939, p. 457.)

A further reward for paying tithing is a guarantee against being consumed in the burning which is to accompany the second coming of the Savior. In the eighty-fifth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord explains that his purpose in tithing his people is "to prepare them against the day of vengeance and burning," (verse 3) and in the sixty-fourth section he says, "Behold, now it is called today until the coming of the Son of Man, and verily it is a day of sacrifice, and a day for the tithing of my people; for he that is tithed shall not be burned at his coming" (D&C 64:23).

Personally, I have always considered tithing to be the law of inheritance in the land of Zion, for the Lord said when he gave the law that all those who gathered to Zion should observe it or they should not be worthy to abide among the inhabitants of that land (see D&C 119:5).

Be morally clean

And now, the third specific commandment to which I direct your attention is, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (D&C 42:24).

You will recall, of course, Alma's teaching his son Corianton that unchastity is the most serious offense there is in the sight of God, save murder only (see Al. 39:3-5). You will remember, too, these words from Paul's epistle to the Corinthians:

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." (1 Cor. 3:16-17.)

Some years ago the First Presidency said to the youth of the Church, "Better dead, clean, than alive, unclean" (In Conference Report, Apr. 1942, p. 89).

I remember how my father impressed the seriousness of unchastity upon my mind. He and I were standing in the railroad station in Rexburg, Idaho, in the early morning of November 12, 1920. We heard the train whistle and knew that in three minutes I would be on my way to Australia to fill a mission. In that short interval my father said to me, among other things, "My son, you are going a long way from home. But your mother and I, your brother and sisters, will be with you constantly in our thoughts and prayers, we shall rejoice with you in your successes, and we shall sorrow with you in your disappointments. When

you are released and return, we shall be glad to greet you and welcome you back into the family circle. But remember this, my son, we would rather come to this station and take your body off the train in a casket than to have you come home unclean, having lost your virtue."

I pondered that statement at the time. I did not then have the full understanding of it that my father had, but I have never forgotten it.

I can think of no blessings to be more fervently desired than those promised to the pure and the virtuous. Jesus spoke of specific rewards for different virtues but reserved the greatest, so it seems to me, for the pure in heart, "for they," said he, "shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). And not only shall they see the Lord, but they shall feel at home in his presence.

Here is his promise—the Savior's promise: "Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God" (D&C 121:45).

The rewards for virtue and the consequences of unchastity are dramatically portrayed in the lives of Joseph and David.

Joseph, though a slave in Egypt, stood true under pressure of the greatest temptation. As a reward he received the choicest blessings of all the sons of Jacob: he became the progenitor of the two favored tribes of Israel. Most of us take pride in being numbered among his posterity.

David, on the other hand, though highly favored of the Lord (he was, in fact, referred to as a man after God's own heart), yielded to temptation. His unchastity led to murder, and as a consequence, he lost his families and his exaltation (see D&C 132:39).

Live worthily

And now, my brethren, I shall not say more except to renew my

plea that we all believe in and live worthy of the promises of the Lord. Let us not be like some people were in the days of Malachi. They argued that it was unprofitable and vain to serve God because, as they saw it, the proud were made happy, the wicked set up, and they that tempted God were delivered (see Mal. 3:14-15). Let us have the good sense to realize and remember that today, as well as in the days of Malachi, a book of remembrance is written before the Lord for those that fear him and think upon his name, and "they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

"Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

"But," says the Lord in a glorious promise to the righteous, "unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." (Mal. 3:17-18; 4:1-2.)

Keep the commandments

Oh, my beloved brethren, believe in and live for the promises of the Lord by keeping his commandments. If you will do this, even though you do not now have full confidence in these promises, I assure you that that confidence will come.

"Never be weary of good works, but . . . be meek and lowly in heart; for such shall find rest to their souls.

"O, remember, . . . and learn wisdom in thy youth," said Alma; "yea, learn in thy youth to keep the commandments of God.

"Yea, and cry unto God for all thy support; yea, let all thy doings be unto the Lord, and whithersoever thou goest let it be in the Lord; yea, let thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord forever.

"Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning let thy heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day." (Al. 37:34-37.)

That it may be so with all of

you and all of us, I humbly pray. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has just spoken to us.

The Choir and congregation will now join in singing, "Come Ye Children of the Lord."

After the singing, we shall be pleased to hear from President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn, "Come, Ye Children of the Lord."

President N. Eldon Tanner

This is an inspiring sight indeed—the greatest body of men which could be assembled anywhere on the earth, and for the greatest reason. I am always awed by looking out at this audience as I think of all you priesthood holders gathered together in 1,547 buildings throughout the world.

Army of the priesthood

What a great army of the priesthood with the power of God delegated to you to act in his name! I feel a tremendous responsibility as I contemplate the purpose of this gathering.

It seems fitting to recall the words of a song entitled "We Are All Enlisted." Since these words fit into the theme of my message tonight, I should like to repeat some of them as they apply to us as priesthood holders:

*We are all enlisted till the conflict is
o'er. . . .*

*Soldiers in the army, there's a bright
crown in store;*

*We shall win and wear it by and by.
Haste to the battle, quick to the field,
Truth is our helmet, buckler, and
shield.*

*Stand by our colors—proudly they
wave. . . .*

*Hark! 'tis our Captain calls you
today;*

*Lose not a moment, make no delay!
Fight for our Savior, come, come
away! . . .*

*Fighting for a kingdom, and the
world is our foe. . . .*

*Glad to join the army, we will sing
as we go;*

*We shall gain the victory by and by.
Dangers may gather—why should we
fear?*

Saturday, March 31

First Day

*Jesus, our Leader, ever is near.
He will protect us, comfort and
cheer.
(Hymns, no. 210.)*

"Put on the whole armour of God"

The text of my address is from Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians:

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day. . . .

"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with *truth*, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

"And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." (Eph. 6:11-18.)

The great unrest in the world today and the wars and rumors of wars are affecting us greatly; but as Paul says, our greatest and most deadly struggle will be "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, [and] against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Paul then warned the Ephesians, which warning is applicable to us today, that we can only withstand the

evils which surround us by putting on the whole armour of God, which he then described.

David and Goliath

I should like to give you from the scriptures some examples which show how those who are clothed in such armor, which means keeping *all* the commandments of God, are able to withstand the adversary, or their enemies. Let me tell you about David (see 1 Sam. 17).

The Philistines were at war with Israel, and Goliath, the Philistine, was challenging Israel to send a man to fight him, with the understanding that the losers would be slaves of the conquerors.

We are told that Goliath had a helmet of brass upon his head and was armed with a coat of mail; that he had brass upon his legs and between his shoulders; that the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; that his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron; and a shield-bearer went before him.

On the other hand, when David agreed to meet the Philistine he took only his staff and chose five smooth stones out of the brook and put them in his shepherd's bag.

When Goliath saw this young man the Israelites had sent to challenge him, he was disdainful and said: "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

"Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

"This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; . . . that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel." (1 Sam. 17:44-46.)

Then David, clothed with the ar-

mor of God, took a stone from his bag and, with his sling, shot it into the forehead of Goliath, an unprotected part of his body, and he fell dead.

Now, President Romney has told you tonight what happened to David after he became king because he did not continue to have the whole armor of God. We must put on the whole armor of God, or we will be vulnerable to temptation in those areas where we have weaknesses and where we have failed to give ourselves the protection offered through keeping the commandments.

Joseph in Egypt

Another example of the protection which comes from the whole armor of God is found in the life of Joseph who was sold into Egypt (see Gen. 37, 39-47). From his youth he was a faithful and true young man, always keeping the commandments of God.

Because he was favored by his father, Joseph's brothers were jealous of him and plotted to kill him; but his brother Reuben prevailed upon them to spare his life and to cast him into a pit, from which he was later rescued, taken to Egypt, and sold to Potiphar, captain of the king's guard.

Potiphar soon recognized his worth and made him overseer over all that he had. The Bible says that "Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured" (Gen. 39:6).

Thus it was that his master's wife desired him, but Joseph refused her advances, and he fled from her. She caught hold of his cloak, which he left in her hand. This she used as evidence against him.

Her husband believed her lies and cast Joseph into prison, where he remained many years, when he was summoned before Pharaoh, the king.

It seems that the king had a dream which none of his wise men nor magicians could interpret, and

someone remembered that Joseph had interpreted dreams while in prison which came to pass as predicted.

When Pharaoh related his dream unto Joseph, he was able to interpret it and to warn about the seven years of plenty to be followed by seven years of famine which were to come upon Egypt, and to give instructions to the king as to what he should do.

Joseph made it very clear that the interpretation came from God, who through this dream was directing Pharaoh. Because he knew that God was with Joseph, Pharaoh appointed him to be ruler over all the land of Egypt, and in this position he was later able to save his own family from starvation. I think you all know the story.

Joseph had arrayed himself in the whole armor of God, and God was with him through his tribulations, which he withstood; and, continuing to keep the commandments and to call upon God for help and strength, he was blessed and able to do what God required of him.

It is important that we make up our minds early in life as to what we will do and what we will not do. Long before the moment of temptation comes we should have determined that we will resist that cigarette, that drink of whiskey, that act of immorality, or anything that will keep us from enjoying the companionship of the Spirit of the Lord.

We all have different weaknesses and temptations, and we should examine our lives to find out what those weaknesses are and where we should put on extra armor so we can do what is right and not submit to temptation.

Daniel and King Nebuchadnezzar

Now another example: I suppose no one had more or greater experiences regarding the protection which comes from wearing the whole armor of God than did Daniel (see

Dan. 1-2, 6). At the summons of King Nebuchadnezzar, he, with other chosen children of Israel, was brought to live in the king's palace for certain training.

They were to be carefully nourished for three years, at which time they would stand before the king. Apparently they were to be fed with the choicest of food, including the king's meat and wine.

Daniel and his three friends, whom we know as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, begged permission to refuse the king's meat and wine, and the prince who had charge over them told Daniel that the king would be very angry if they appeared less healthy and fair to look upon than the others through their failure to eat the king's fare.

So Daniel asked for a period of ten days in which they might eat pulse, meaning vegetables, and drink water, and then be compared with the others who were eating and drinking the king's fare—meat and wine.

After ten days they looked better and appeared healthier than all the others, so they were allowed to continue.

At the end of three years, when they were brought before the king, we are told that among them all was found none like Daniel and his three friends, and in all matters of wisdom and understanding, the king found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers in his realm.

What a great parallel with the promise given in our Word of Wisdom that "all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

"And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

"And shall run and not be

weary, and shall walk and not faint.

"And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them." (D&C 89:18-21.)

Each of these promises was fulfilled in behalf of Daniel and his friends in the following accounts of their most interesting experiences.

King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which troubled him but which he could not recall. He was about to put to death all of his wise men and astrologers, including Daniel and his friends, because none could tell him the dream nor the interpretation. But Daniel asked the king for a little time and promised that he would tell him the dream and its interpretation.

After Daniel pleaded with the Lord, the secret was revealed to him in a vision, and he was able to tell the king his dream and the interpretation. But he made it very clear to the king that the secret had been revealed by the God in heaven, and its purpose was to let the king know some of the events that would come to pass concerning his kingdom and how the kingdom of God would eventually be established upon the earth.

The king was greatly impressed and said to Daniel, "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret" (Dan. 2:47).

Daniel was still in favor with the next two succeeding kings, but the king's advisers were jealous and tried to find some reason to discredit Daniel. They could find none, but knowing of Daniel's prayers to his God, contrived to have the king issue a decree that anyone asking a petition of any god or man save the king should be cast into the den of lions.

You know what happened. In spite of this order, Daniel continued to pray. When he was seen, he was taken before the king, who, because

of his regard for Daniel, was displeased with himself for issuing the decree and would have freed Daniel; but he was reminded that the law of the Medes and Persians required that no decree may be changed but must be carried out.

As Daniel was cast into the den of lions, the disturbed king said to him, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee" (Dan 6:16).

He spent a sleepless night and went early to the den of lions, where he rejoiced to find Daniel still alive, who said to him, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt" (Dan. 6:22).

The king had Daniel brought out of the lions' den and his accusers cast in, who were immediately killed by the hungry beasts.

Daniel, having kept all of the commandments, indeed had clothed himself in the whole armor of God. Are we prepared to act as did David and Joseph and Daniel—continuing to keep the commandments—and others whom we know to have been protected because they worshiped and served the true God and kept his commandments?

Are we keeping God's commandments?

Consider the following questions:

Are we studying the scriptures so that we can increase our knowledge and faith and testimony regarding the gospel? Do we keep the commandments? Are we honest and truthful in our dealings? Do we keep the Sabbath day holy? Do we observe the Word of Wisdom? Do we pay an honest tithing? Do we attend our meetings and respond to the calls made of us by our authorities? Are

we virtuous and clean and pure in heart and mind and deed?

Do we fight against the evils around us—pornography, abortion, tobacco, alcohol, drugs? Do we have the courage to stand up for our convictions? Can we truly say we are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ? Do we live peaceably with our neighbors and avoid gossip and backbiting and spreading unfounded rumors? Do we truly love our neighbors as ourselves?

If we can answer yes to these questions, then we will have on the whole armor of God, which will protect us from harm and preserve us from our enemies. If we must answer no to these questions, then our armor is weak, there is an unshielded place which can be found, a vulnerable area for attack, and we will be subject to injury or destruction by Satan, who will search until he finds our weaknesses, if we have them.

Examine your "armor"

Examine your armor. Is there an unguarded or unprotected place? Determine now to add whatever part is missing. No matter how antiquated or lacking in parts your armor may be, always remember that it is within your power to make the necessary adjustments to complete your armor.

Through the great principle of repentance you can turn your life about and begin now clothing yourself with the armor of God through study, prayer, and a determination to serve God and keep his commandments.

Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood

May I conclude with the oath and covenant of the priesthood, which if observed and kept will provide a shield and a protection, with all the promised blessings for the faithful:

"For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies.

"They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.

"And also all they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord;

"For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me;

"And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father;

"And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him.

"And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood.

"Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father,

which he cannot break, neither can it be moved.

"But whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and altogether turneth therefrom, shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come." (D&C 84:33-41.)

Brethren, we are greatly blessed to know that God lives and we are his spirit children; that his son, Jesus Christ, gave his life so that we might be resurrected and enjoy eternal life.

We belong to the Church of Jesus Christ, which was reestablished through the Prophet Joseph Smith. We hold the priesthood of God, and the progress of the Church depends on us and how fully we magnify our callings and follow the instructions of our present-day prophet, President Spencer W. Kimball.

I exhort all of you to listen closely to his messages and follow him. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Brethren, we have had a rich experience this night, listening to the servants of the Lord. They have given to us words of truth and righteousness. I hope that these words have sunk deep into the hearts of all those who have been listening tonight.

President Wilford Woodruff

This morning Elder Howard W. Hunter spoke of one of the presidents of the Church, Wilford Woodruff, and it stirred my memory of some experiences of President Woodruff that I had been reading about. I would like to tell you of two or three of them while we are concluding this meeting. All of these experiences happened to him while he was a

youth like those of you holding the Aaronic Priesthood.

President Woodruff was one of the great spiritual giants of this dispensation. The Lord gave him many dreams and visions; he baptized thousands of converts, as was explained to us today, and he performed many, many miracles. Few men have enjoyed more of the guidance of the Holy Spirit than did President Woodruff. He was an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, was valiant and true all his days, and, in the provinces of the Lord, he was the fourth president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He is the one who dedicated the Salt Lake Temple in 1893, and it was to him that the founders of the Ameri-

can nation appeared in the St. George Temple, seeking to have the temple ordinances performed for them. That was very unusual, brethren, and those kinds of miracles and visions and revelations were rather unusual, as you would know. These men of the American Constitution had lived in a day when the gospel was not upon the earth, but they were upright, good men who were entitled to all of the blessings which come to us.

We all need heroes to honor and admire; we need people after whom we can pattern our lives. For us Christ is the chiefest of these. "What manner of men ought ye to be?" he asked his Nephite disciples. His answer, "Verily I say unto you, even as I am." (3 Ne. 27:27.) Christ is our pattern, our guide, our prototype, and our friend. We seek to be like him so that we can always be with him. In a lesser degree the apostles and prophets who have lived as Christ lived also become examples for us.

Coming back to the thought of this special vision: Brother Woodruff saw to it through the authorities at the temple there that these people received their endowments and the blessings to which they were entitled. The wives went in and did the work for the women, who were anxious that this work be done. Now you can see why Elder Royden G. Derrick spoke to us today about temple service. There are millions of people in the spirit world who are anxious that this work be done for them, realizing that they have come to a halt. They cannot go further until the work has been done for them.

President Woodruff's conversion

Brother Woodruff said:

"The first sermon that I ever heard in this Church was in 1833, by old father Zera Pulsipher, who died in the south, after having lived to be

considerably over eighty years old. That sermon was what I had prayed for from my childhood," he said. "When I heard it I had a testimony for myself that it was true. I received it with every sentiment of my heart. He preached in a schoolhouse upon a farm that we owned in Oswego County, New York. He opened the door for any remarks to be made. The house was crowded. The first thing I knew I stood on top of a bench before the people, not knowing what I got up for. But I said to my neighbors and friends, 'I want you to be careful what you say as touching these men (there were two of them) and their testimony, for they are servants of God, and they have testified unto us the truth—principles that I have been looking for from my childhood.'

"I went forth and was baptized. I was ordained a teacher. I was always sorry that I was not a deacon first, for I had a desire to bear the priesthood in its various degrees as far as I was worthy. I had had a desire for years, not only to hear the gospel, but to have the privilege and power of preaching it to my fellow men. I was a miller by trade, and I spent many a midnight hour in the mill calling upon the Lord for light and truth, and praying that I might hear the gospel of Christ, and be able to teach it to my fellow men. I rejoiced in it when I did receive it." (*Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, sel. G. Homer Durham, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1946, p. 304.)

President Woodruff was born March 1, 1807; he was baptized December 31, 1833, when he was twenty-six years old, and was ordained a teacher on January 25, 1834.

Youth should seek testimonies

What we learn from this experience is that he prayed in his childhood to know the truth, and in his

young manhood he spent many nights calling upon the Lord. We learn that he desired to preach the gospel, that his heart was right, and that he immediately believed the gospel when he heard it preached.

Young people should seek to gain testimonies and should desire to go on missions. We appreciated what was said about the missions this afternoon by President Ezra Taft Benson. All young men in the Church should be very eager to go on a mission, and they should also assist their parents to fill missions after the families are raised.

Fulfillment of dream

Now for the second experience of Brother Woodruff: "When I was a boy eleven years old," President Woodruff says, "I had a very interesting dream, part of which was fulfilled to the very letter. In this dream I saw a great gulf, a place where all the world had to enter at death, before doing which they had to drop their worldly goods. I saw an aged man with a beaver hat and a broad-cloth suit. The man looked very sorrowful. I saw him come with something on his back, which he had to drop among the general pile before he could enter the gulf. I was then but a boy. A few years after this my father and mother removed to Farmington, and there I saw that man. I knew him the moment I saw him. His name was Chauncy Deming. In a few years afterwards he was taken sick and died. I attended his funeral," President Woodruff said. "He was what you may call a miser, worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. When the coffin was being lowered into the grave my dream came to me, and that night his son-in-law found one hundred thousand dollars in a cellar belonging to the old man. I name this merely to show that in this dream I had manifested to

me certain things that were true. I think of all the inhabitants of the world having to leave their goods when they come to the grave.

"After this scene had passed before me I was placed in a great temple. It was called the kingdom of God. The first man who came to me was Uncle Ozem Woodruff and his wife whom I helped into the temple.

"In process of time, after embracing the gospel, and while on my first mission to Tennessee, I told Brother Patten of my dream, who told me that in a few years I would meet that man and baptize him. That was fulfilled to the very letter, for I afterwards baptized my uncle and his wife and some of the children; also my own father and stepmother and stepsister; and a Methodist priest or classleader—in fact, I baptized everybody in my father's house. I merely mention this to show that dreams sometimes do come to pass in life." (*Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, pp. 283-84.)

Young people should study the Gospel

Alma tells us that the Lord "Imparteth his word by angels unto men, yea, not only men but women also. Now this is not all; little children do have words given unto them many times which confound the wise and the learned." (Al. 32:23.)

Young children are just as much entitled to the blessings of the Lord as are their parents. Joseph Smith was only fourteen years of age when the Father and the Son appeared to him to usher in this dispensation. He was seventeen when Moroni visited him and revealed to him the hiding place of the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated.

Young people should study the gospel, prepare themselves for service in the Church, and keep the

commandments as diligently as it is possible to do.

President Woodruff's desire to serve mission

The third experience:

"... While holding the office of teacher I went to Missouri in Zion's Camp. After arriving in Missouri, having gone through many trials and tribulations, and suffering from cholera, which caused us to lay in the grave fifteen of our brethren, we stayed at Brother Lyman Wight's. While at Lyman Wight's, I attended council meetings with the Prophet, with David Whitmer, with Oliver Cowdery, and other leading brethren of the Church. David Whitmer was the president of the stake of Zion. Brother Joseph reproved him very sharply, as well as some of the other brethren, because of their lack in fulfilling the commandments of God and doing their duty.

"While at that place I had a great desire in my heart to go and preach the gospel. I went off one Sunday night by myself into a hickory grove, several hundred yards from the settlement, and I asked the Lord to open the door for me that I might go and preach the gospel. I did not want to preach the gospel for any honor I might get on this earth; for I thoroughly understood, as far as a man could in my condition, what a preacher would have to pass through. It was not honor, nor wealth, nor gold, nor silver, that I desired: But I knew this was the gospel of Christ, revealed to me by the power of God; I knew this was the Church of Christ; I knew Joseph Smith was a prophet of God; and I had a desire that I might preach that gospel to the nations of the earth. I asked the Lord to give me that privilege. The Lord answered that prayer, and said I should have my desire granted. I got up rejoicing. I walked about two hundred

yards out in the open road; and when I got into the road there stood Judge Higbee. Said he, 'Brother Woodruff, the Lord has revealed to me that it is your duty to be ordained to go and preach the gospel.'

"Said I, 'Has he?'

"'Yes.'

"'Well,' said I, 'If the Lord wants me to preach the gospel, I am perfectly willing to go and do that.' I did not tell him I had been praying for this.

"The consequence was I attended a council at Lyman Wight's, and was called and ordained to the office of a priest in the Aaronic Priesthood, while other brethren were ordained elders. I was called by Bishop Partridge to go to the southern country on a mission. Bishop Partridge asked me a great many questions, and I asked him questions. It was then dangerous for any of our brethren to go through Jackson County [Missouri.] He wanted me to go to Arkansas, and the road led square through Jackson County. I asked him if we should go through there (I had a companion with me—an elder).

"Said he, 'If you have got faith to do it, you may; I haven't.'

"I thought that was a curious remark from a bishop.

"'Well,' said I, 'The Lord says we must travel without purse or scrip; shall we do it?'

"Said he, 'That is the law of God; if you have faith to do it, you can do it.'

"He said he had hardly got faith to go into Jackson County. However, we started and went through Jackson County. We came near losing our lives, and were saved almost by a miracle. We traveled through Arkansas and other parts.

"But I do not want to dwell on these things. I merely wish to say that I went out as a priest, and my companion as an elder, and we traveled thousands of miles, and had

many things manifested to us. I desire to impress upon you the fact that it does not make any difference whether a man is a priest or an apostle, if he magnifies his calling. A priest holds the key of the ministering of angels. Never in my life, as an apostle, as a seventy, or as an elder, have I ever had more of the protection of the Lord than while holding the office as a priest. The Lord revealed to me by visions, by revelations, and by the Holy Spirit, many things that lay before me." (*Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, pp. 298-300.)

President Woodruff sought the privilege to go on a mission when he was a teacher, and he went forth as a missionary when he was a priest. The Lord blessed him and preserved him and gave him many visions and revelations.

Be devout and faithful

I just wish to say this in conclusion: It is wonderful to meet this large body of brethren who hold the priesthood and I sincerely feel that the men who have come here tonight—the men and boys—reverence and appreciate their priesthood and the privileges that are given to them. We will close this meeting with our love and appreciation to all men and boys and their wives and mothers in all the lands of this world. We ask them to be devout and faithful and true to all of the testimonies they have. I bear this testimony to you that this work is divine. We have a special work to do

and we must do it, and I pray this all in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Sessions of the Conference tomorrow will be broadcast to a large audience, in many parts of the United States, and Canada, over the many television and radio stations, cooperating to provide extensive coverage of this conference.

Many radio stations will broadcast tomorrow morning (Sunday), in major cities of Mexico and Central America, and by satellite transmission in Australia, and countries of South America.

The nationwide CBS radio Tabernacle Choir broadcast will be from 9:30 to 10:00 Sunday morning. Those desiring to attend must be in their seats before 9:15 A.M.

In leaving this priesthood meeting tonight, we remind you to obey traffic rules, to use caution, and to be courteous in driving.

The beautiful music for this priesthood session has been furnished by the combined men of the Tabernacle Choir and Mormon Youth Chorus. We are grateful to you men for your beautiful music, and express sincere thanks for the service you have given here tonight.

The Choir will close this meeting with, "Cherubim Song," following which Elder Ronald E. Poelman, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will offer the benediction.

The Choir sang the anthem, "Cherubim Song."

The benediction was pronounced by Elder Ronald E. Poelman.

SECOND DAY MORNING MEETING

FOURTH SESSION

The Fourth Session of the General Conference commenced at 10:00 A.M. on Sunday, April 1, 1979, with President Spencer W. Kimball presiding and conducting.

The Tabernacle Choir provided the music for this session, with Brothers Jerold Ottley and Donald Ripplinger conducting, and Brother John Longhurst at the organ.

Prior to the beginning of the session, the Tabernacle Choir sang the hymn, "Jehovah, Lord of Heaven and Earth," without announcement.

President Kimball then made the following remarks:

President Spencer W. Kimball

We welcome all who are present this morning in the historic Tabernacle, on Temple Square, in this fourth session of the 149th Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We also acknowledge those who are seated in the overflow congregations in the Assembly Hall, and Salt Palace, and those tuned to this Conference by radio and television.

Elders A. Theodore Tuttle and Vaughn J. Featherstone preside in the Assembly Hall, and Elders J. Thomas Fyans and Dean L. Larsen preside in the Salt Palace.

We acknowledge the presence this morning of government, education, and civic leaders, and officers and members of the Church from many lands, who have assembled to worship, and to counsel together in this Conference.

The Tabernacle Choir, under the direction of Brothers Jerold Ottley and Donald Ripplinger, with Brother John Longhurst at the organ, is providing the music for this session. The Choir opened these services by singing, "Jehovah, Lord of Heaven and Earth," and will now sing, "Lovely Appear," following which Elder Charles A. Didier, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and, Supervisor of the Europe West Area, will offer the invocation.

The Choir sang, "Lovely Appear." Elder Charles A. Didier offered the invocation.

Following the invocation, the Choir sang the hymn, "How Wondrous and Great" without announcement.

President Kimball

The Tabernacle Choir has sung, "How Wondrous and Great."

It will now be our privilege to hear from President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency of the Church.

President Marion G. Romney

My beloved brothers and sisters and, particularly, nonmember friends, you are listening to the proceedings of a session of the annual April general conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, frequently referred to as the Mormon Church.

"Mormon"

The nickname *Mormon* is associated with the Church and its members because we accept as scripture a book titled the Book of Mormon. This book is a translation of an an-

cient record inscribed on gold plates which, in September 1827, were delivered by an angel to Joseph Smith, a twenty-one-year-old youth.

When the angel first advised Joseph concerning the plates, he said, to quote Joseph, "that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni; that . . . there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in [the record]. . . .

"Also, that there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted 'seers' in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book." (Jos. Smith 2:33-35.)

By the power of God, Joseph translated the record and in 1830 published the translation in book form, under the title the Book of Mormon.

The record revealed the fact that Mormon was the father of Moroni. He was an able military leader in his day, a learned historian, and a great prophet. He lived in America during the last half of the fourth century A.D. The book bears his name because he made a compilation and an abridgment of the then extant historical records. His abridgment constituted most of what Joseph Smith translated from the gold plates, which he received from Moroni, who had deposited them in the Hill Cumorah, located in western New York state, in about A.D. 421.

Correct name of Church

Members of the Church do not resent being referred to as Mormons,

nor does the Church resent being referred to as the Mormon church. As we have said, however, it is not the correct name of the Church. Its correct name is, as we have already explained, "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (D&C 115:4).

This name was officially confirmed by Jesus Christ himself when, on April 26, 1838, at Far West, Missouri, in a revelation addressed to the presiding officers of the Church, he said—and this is Christ himself speaking:

"Verily thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and also . . . unto all the elders and people of my *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, scattered abroad in all the world;

"For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*." (D&C 115:1, 3-4; Italics added.)

"Take upon you the name of Christ"

This declaration by the Lord is reminiscent of the account the Book of Mormon gives of Christ's statement to his disciples in America as he ministered among them immediately following his resurrection.

"And it came to pass [reads that record] that as the disciples of Jesus were journeying and were preaching the things which they had both heard and seen, and were baptizing in the name of Jesus . . . that the disciples were gathered together and were united in mighty prayer and fasting.

"And Jesus [this was the resurrected Jesus, in America] again showed himself unto them, for they were praying unto the Father in his name; and Jesus came and stood in the midst of them, and said unto them: What will ye that I shall give unto you?

"And they said unto him: Lord, we will that thou wouldst tell us the name whereby we shall call this

church; for there are disputations among the people concerning this matter.

"And the Lord said unto them: Verily, verily, I say unto you, why is it that the people should murmur and dispute because of this thing?

"Have they not read the scriptures, which say ye must take upon you the name of Christ, which is my name? For by this name shall ye be called at the last day;

"And whoso taketh upon him my name, and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day.

"Therefore, whatsoever ye shall do, ye shall do it in my name; therefore ye shall call the church in my name; and ye shall call upon the Father in my name that he will bless the church for my sake.

"And how be it my church save it be called in my name? For if a church be called in Moses' name then it be Moses' church; or if it be called in the name of a man then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel.

"Verily I say unto you, that ye are built upon my gospel; therefore ye shall call whatsoever things ye do call, in my name; therefore if ye call upon the Father, for the church, if it be in my name the Father will hear you;

"And if it so be that the church is built upon my gospel then will the Father show forth his own works in it.

"But if it be not built upon my gospel, and is built upon the works of men, or upon the works of the devil, verily I say unto you they have joy in their works for a season, and by and by the end cometh, and they are hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence there is no return.

"For their works do follow them, for it is because of their works that they are hewn down; therefore

remember the things that I have told you.

"Behold I have given unto you my gospel, and this is the gospel which I have given unto you—[this is the Christ, now defining his gospel] that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me.

"And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; and after that I had been lifted up upon the cross, that I might draw all men unto me, that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil—

"And for this cause have I been lifted up; therefore, according to the power of the Father I will draw all men unto me, that they may be judged according to their works.

"And it shall come to pass, that whoso repenteth and is baptized in my name shall be filled; and if he endureth to the end, behold, him will I hold guiltless before my Father at that day when I shall stand to judge the world.

"And he that endureth not unto the end, the same is he that is also hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence they can no more return, because of the justice of the Father.

"And this is the word which he hath given unto the children of men. And for this cause he fulfilleth the words which he hath given, and he lieth not, but fulfilleth all his words.

"And no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end.

"Now this is the commandment [by the risen Redeemer to the ancient Americans, and it is still his com-

Sunday, April 1

Second Day

mandment]: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day." (3 Ne. 27:1-20.)

Such is the name and such are the basic doctrines taught by the Church sometimes referred to as the Mormon Church.

The true and living Church

Not only did the Redeemer personally name his Church, "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" as recounted already in these remarks, he also declared it to be "the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased" (D&C 1:30).

The background for this declaration was as follows:

"Through a period of more than six years prior to [April 6th, 1830, when the Church was organized] Joseph Smith, the Prophet, had received at intervals Divine revelations and commandments. . . .

"As early as the summer of 1830, the Prophet, acting under Divine commandment, was engaged in copying and arranging the revelations received up to that time, evidently with a view to their publication in book form. On November 1, 1831, at a conference of the Elders of the Church held at Hiram, Ohio, definite action relating to the publication of the revelations [which the Prophet had received and compiled] was taken, and the compilation was called the *Book of Commandments*. The Lord's acceptance of the undertaking was made manifest by the giving of the revelation . . . appearing as Section 1 [of our Doctrine and Covenants] . . . known as the *Preface*." (D&C, Explanatory Introduction, iii; see also

History of the Church, 1:222 and the introductory note to D&C 1.)

Because of the universal importance of the content of this revelation, I shall conclude these remarks by quoting therefrom. The Lord began it by calling for the attention of all men—not just members of the Church, but all men, he said as he opened the revelation:

"Hearken, O ye people of my church, saith the voice of him who dwells on high, and whose eyes are upon all men; yea, verily I say: Hearken ye people from afar; and ye that are upon the islands of the sea, listen together.

"For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated.

"And the rebellious shall be pierced with much sorrow; for their iniquities shall be spoken upon the housetops, and their secret acts shall be revealed.

"And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days.

"And they shall go forth and none shall stay them, for I the Lord have commanded them.

"Behold, this is mine authority, and the authority of my servants, and my preface unto the book of my commandments, which I have given them to publish unto you, O inhabitants of the earth.

"Wherefore, fear and tremble, O ye people, for what I the Lord have decreed in them shall be fulfilled. . . .

"Wherefore the voice of the Lord is unto the ends of the earth, that all that will hear may hear:

"Prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh;

"And the anger of the Lord is kindled, and his sword is bathed in

heaven, and it shall fall upon the inhabitants of the earth.

"And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people;

"For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

"They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own God, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.

"Search these commandments"

"Wherefore, I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments;

"And also gave commandments to others, that they should proclaim these things unto the world. . . .

"Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding. . . .

"And after having received the record of the Nephites, yea, even my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., might have power to translate through the mercy of God, by the power of God, the Book of Mormon.

"And also those to whom these commandments were given, might have power to lay the foundation of this church, and to bring it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness, the

only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased, speaking unto the church collectively and not individually—

"For I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance;

"Nevertheless, he that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven;

"And he that repents not, from him shall be taken even the light which he has received; for my Spirit shall not always strive with man, saith the Lord of Hosts.

"And again, verily I say unto you, O inhabitants of the earth: I the Lord am willing to make these things known unto all flesh;

"For I am no respecter of persons, and will that all men shall know that the day speedily cometh; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand, when peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion.

"And also the Lord shall have power over his saints, and shall reign in their midst, and shall come down in judgment upon Idumea, or the world.

"Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled.

"What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.

"For behold, and lo, the Lord is God, and the Spirit beareth record, and the record is true, and the truth abideth forever and ever. Amen." (D&C 1:1-7, 11-18, 24, 29-39.)

To the truth of these great revelations, I bear my personal witness. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, amen.

Following President Romney's remarks, the Tabernacle Choir sang "Come Unto Jesus", without announcement.

President Spencer W. Kimball

We have heard from president Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing, "Come Unto Jesus."

The Choir will now continue by

singing, "Daughter of Zion," following which Elder James E. Faust, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will address us.

The Choir sang, "Daughter of Zion."

President Kimball

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder James E. Faust, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder James E. Faust

Coming to this pulpit is always a very humbling responsibility. I seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit and pray that what I have to say will be guided by the Spirit and that it may abundantly rest upon all of us so that you might understand also by that special spirit.

I wish to speak this morning to all, but especially to those who feel they have had more trials, sorrows, pricks, and thorns than they can bear and in their adversity are almost drowned in the waters of bitterness. My message is intended as one of hope, strength, and deliverance. I speak of the refiner's fire.

Martin handcart company

Some years ago President David O. McKay told from this pulpit of the experience of some of those in the Martin handcart company. Many of these early converts had emigrated from Europe and were too poor to buy oxen or horses and a wagon. They were forced by their poverty to pull handcarts containing all of their belongings across the plains by their own brute strength. President McKay relates an occurrence which took

place some years after the heroic exodus: "A teacher, conducting a class, said it was unwise ever to attempt, even to permit them [the Martin handcart company] to come across the plains under such conditions.

"[According to a class member,] some sharp criticism of the Church and its leaders was being indulged in for permitting any company of converts to venture across the plains with no more supplies or protection than a handcart caravan afforded.

"An old man in the corner . . . sat silent and listened as long as he could stand it, then he arose and said things that no person who heard him will ever forget. His face was white with emotion, yet he spoke calmly, deliberately, but with great earnestness and sincerity.

"In substance [he] said, 'I ask you to stop this criticism. You are discussing a matter you know nothing about. Cold historic facts mean nothing here, for they give no proper interpretation of the questions involved. Mistake to send the Handcart Company out so late in the season? Yes. But I was in that company and

my wife was in it and Sister Nellie Unthank whom you have cited was there, too. We suffered beyond anything you can imagine and many died of exposure and starvation, but did you ever hear a survivor of that company utter a word of criticism? *Not one of that company ever apostatized or left the Church, because everyone of us came through with the absolute knowledge that God lives for we became acquainted with him in our extremities.*

"I have pulled my handcart when I was so weak and weary from illness and lack of food that I could hardly put one foot ahead of the other. I have looked ahead and seen a patch of sand or a hill slope and I have said, I can go only that far and there I must give up, for I cannot pull the load through it." He continues: "I have gone on to that sand and when I reached it, the cart began pushing me. I have looked back many times to see who was pushing my cart, but my eyes saw no one. I knew then that the angels of God were there.

"Was I sorry that I chose to come by handcart? No. Neither then nor any minute of my life since. *The price we paid to become acquainted with God was a privilege to pay, and I am thankful that I was privileged to come in the Martin Handcart Company.*" (*Relief Society Magazine*, Jan. 1948, p. 8.)

The refiner's fire

Here then is a great truth. In the pain, the agony, and the heroic endeavors of life, we pass through a refiner's fire, and the insignificant and the unimportant in our lives can melt away like dross and make our faith bright, intact, and strong. In this way the divine image can be mirrored from the soul. It is part of the purging toll exacted of some to become acquainted with God. In the agonies of life, we seem to listen

better to the faint, godly whisperings of the Divine Shepherd.

Into every life there come the painful, despairing days of adversity and buffeting. There seems to be a full measure of anguish, sorrow, and often heartbreak for everyone, including those who earnestly seek to do right and be faithful. The thorns that prick, that stick in the flesh, that hurt, often change lives which seem robbed of significance and hope. This change comes about through a refining process which often seems cruel and hard. In this way the soul can become like soft clay in the hands of the Master in building lives of faith, usefulness, beauty, and strength. For some, the refiner's fire causes a loss of belief and faith in God, but those with eternal perspective understand that such refining is part of the perfection process.

In our extremities, it is possible to become born again, born anew, renewed in heart and spirit. We no longer ride with the flow of the crowd, but instead we enjoy the promise of Isaiah to be renewed in our strength and "mount up with wings as eagles" (Isa. 40:31).

The proving of one's faith goes before the witnessing, for Moroni testified, "Ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith" (Eth. 12:6). This trial of faith can become a priceless experience. Stated Peter, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:7). Trials and adversity can be preparatory to becoming born anew.

Spiritual rebirth

A rebirth out of spiritual adversity causes us to become new creatures. From the book of Mosiah we learn that all mankind must be born again—born of God, changed, re-

deemed, and uplifted—to become the sons and daughters of God. (See Mosiah 27:24-27.)

President Marion G. Romney, speaking for the Lord, has said of this marvelous power: "The effect upon each person's life is likewise similar. No person whose soul is illuminated by the burning Spirit of God can in this world of sin and dense darkness remain passive. He is driven by an irresistible urge to fit himself to be an active agent of God in furthering righteousness and in freeing the lives and minds of men from the bondage of sin." (In Conference Report, 4 Oct. 1941, p. 89.)

The feelings of being reborn were expressed by Parley P. Pratt as follows:

"If I had been set to turn the world over, to dig down a mountain, to go to the ends of the earth, or traverse the deserts of Arabia, it would have been easier than to have undertaken to rest, while the Priesthood was upon me. I have received the holy anointing, and I can never rest till the last enemy is conquered, death destroyed, and truth reigns triumphant." (*Journal of Discourses*, 1:15.)

Unfortunately, some of our greatest tribulations are the result of our own foolishness and weakness and occur because of our own carelessness or transgression. Central to solving these problems is the great need to get back on the right track and, if necessary, engage in each of the steps for full and complete repentance. Through this great principle, many things can be made fully right and all things better. We can go to others for help. To whom can we go? Elder Orson F. Whitney asked and answered this question: "To whom do we look, in days of grief and disaster, for help and consolation? . . . They are men and women who have suffered, and out of their experience in suffering they bring forth the riches of their sym-

thy and condolences as a blessing to those now in need. Could they do this had they not suffered themselves?"

" . . . Is not this God's purpose in causing his children to suffer? He wants them to become more like himself. God has suffered far more than man ever did or ever will, and is therefore the great source of sympathy and consolation." (*Improvement Era*, Nov. 1918, p. 7.)

Isaiah, before the Savior's birth, referred to him as "a man of sorrows" (Isa. 53:3). Speaking in the Doctrine and Covenants of himself, the Savior said:

"Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink" (D&C 19:18).

Afflictions are not punishment

Some are prone to feel that their afflictions are punishment. Roy Doxey states:

"The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that it is a false idea to believe that the saints will escape all the judgments—disease, pestilence, war, etc.—of the last days; consequently, it is an unhallowed principle to say that these adversities are due to transgression. . . .

"President Joseph F. Smith taught that it is a feeble thought to believe that the illness and affliction that come to us are attributable either to the mercy or the displeasure of God." (*The Doctrine and Covenants Speaks*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1970, vol. 2, p. 373.)

Paul understood this perfectly. When referring to the Savior, he said:

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

"And being made perfect, he

became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Heb. 5:8-9).

Stillman Pond

For some, the suffering is extraordinary.

Stillman Pond was a member of the Second Quorum of Seventy in Nauvoo. He was an early convert to the Church, having come from Hubbardston, Massachusetts. Like others, he and his wife, Maria, and their children were harassed and driven out of Nauvoo. In September 1846, they became part of the great western migration. The early winter that year brought extreme hardships, including malaria, cholera, and consumption. The family was visited by all three of these diseases.

Maria contracted consumption, and all of the children were stricken with malaria. Three of the children died while moving through the early snows. Stillman buried them on the plains. Maria's condition worsened because of the grief, pain, and the fever of malaria. She could no longer walk. Weakened and sickly, she gave birth to twins. They were named Joseph and Hyrum, and both died within a few days.

The Stillman Pond family arrived at Winter Quarters and, like many other families, they suffered bitterly while living in a tent. The death of the five children coming across the plains to Winter Quarters was but a beginning.

The journal of Horace K. and Helen Mar Whitney verifies the following regarding four more of the children of Stillman Pond who perished:

"On Wednesday, the 2nd of December 1846, Laura Jane Pond, age 14 years, . . . died of chills and fever." Two days later on "Friday, the 4th of December 1846, Harriet M. Pond, age 11 years, . . . died with chills." Three days later,

"Monday, the 7th of December, 1846, Abigail A. Pond, age 18 years, . . . died with chills." Just five weeks later, "Friday, the 15th of January, 1847, Lyman Pond, age 6 years, . . . died with chills and fever." Four months later, on the 17th of May, 1847, his wife Maria Davis Pond also died. Crossing the plains, Stillman Pond lost nine children and a wife. He became an outstanding colonizer in Utah, and became the senior president of the thirty-fifth Quorum of Seventy. (See Leon Y. and H. Ray Pond, comps., "Stillman Pond, a Biographical Sketch," in *Sterling Forsyth Histories*, typescript, Church Historical Dept. Archives, pp. 4-5.)

Having lost these nine children and his wife in crossing the plains, Stillman Pond did not lose his faith. He did not quit. He went forward. He paid a price, as have many others before and since, to become acquainted with God.

Divine purpose in adversities

The Divine Shepherd has a message of hope, strength, and deliverance for all. If there were no night, we would not appreciate the day, nor could we see the stars and the vastness of the heavens. We must partake of the bitter with the sweet. There is a divine purpose in the adversities we encounter every day. They prepare, they purge, they purify, and thus they bless.

When we pluck the roses, we find we often cannot avoid the thorns which spring from the same stem.

Out of the refiner's fire can come a glorious deliverance. It can be a noble and lasting rebirth. The price to become acquainted with God will have been paid. There can come a sacred peace. There will be a reawakening of dormant, inner resources. A comfortable cloak of righteousness will be drawn around us to protect us and to keep us warm

spiritually. Self-pity will vanish as our blessings are counted.

Testimony

I now wish to conclude by testifying concerning Jesus as the Christ and the Divine Redeemer. He lives! His are the sweet words of eternal life. He is the Son of the Living God. This is his holy work and glory. This is his church. It is true. I am most grateful for this sacred knowledge. It is my cherished privilege and duty to so testify, which I humbly do. In the hallowed name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

The hymn, "The Morning Breaks" was sung by the Choir following Elder Faust's remarks, without announcement.

President Spencer W. Kimball

We have just listened to Elder James E. Faust, a member of the

Council of the Twelve Apostles, followed by the Choir singing, "The Morning Breaks."

The Choir and congregation will now join in singing, "How Firm A Foundation," following which we shall hear from Elder James M. Paramore, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The Choir and congregation sang "How Firm A Foundation."

President Kimball

To those of the television and radio audience who have just joined us, we are convened in the historic Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, in this fourth session of the 149th Annual Conference of the Church.

We shall now hear from Elder James M. Paramore, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. He will be followed by Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder James M. Paramore

My brothers and sisters, I am grateful to be a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I would like to thank you, all of you members, for all that you have done for me these past two years. I solicit your faith and prayers this morning as I speak with you about the subject of commitment.

Commitment

A short time ago I attended a very special dinner meeting. It was to honor a friend who had given many years of total commitment to a special group of people. I watched

group after group bring gifts, embrace, and thank him for what he had done for them. As I saw him stand before the hundreds gathered that night, I thought: "How could anyone so young have done so much in such a short time?"

Then I reflected on the thousands of selfless acts he had done for these people; his encouragement in the face of almost insurmountable obstacles. He gave his time, home, money, skills—his total commitment to do everything he could to help them. It was like being in a testimony meeting. I went away thanking

the Lord for his life and the fact that one person's commitment can make such a difference. I learned again that night that commitment is doing what everyone *can do*—but usually doesn't. When one commits himself like this young man, it is like opening up the headgates of a mighty dam, permitting all its power to become available.

As I think of commitment I recall one of many solemn days of commitment in the life of the Savior. Jesus had just touched the ear of a servant of one of the high priests and healed him. Only moments before, his ear had been severed by a sword. And then Jesus was taken into the high priest's house where he was mocked, bound, blindfolded, and spat upon. The next day he was taken again before the council and was again scourged and berated. He might have saved himself. Instead, he stood majestically before his accusers and acknowledged his sonship, his kingship, his personal commitment to his Father and to all mankind. This ultimately changed the destiny of every living soul. How many hundreds of times because of fatigue, hunger, pain, or disappointment he might have disavowed this commitment.

The Savior's commitment was a very special one, to be sure. It could only be done by him. But we, too, have commitments to make—commitments to him, our families, and others. These are essential to our happiness here and our exaltation hereafter.

What of commitment? Does it really make a difference? The Lord spoke of this principle to the Prophet Joseph Smith on August 1, 1831:

"Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness;

"For the power is in them" (D&C 58:27-28).

Commitment, as we have observed, is to be an example of goodness. It is to be "anxiously engaged" and "do many things" of our "own free will." It is not by compulsion, but because of our desire to "bring to pass much righteousness." Commitment is not confessing, but doing. It is not convenient. It isn't easy—it's never easy. It is example leadership. It is a binding, but happy, response to duty. It is at once peaceful yet compelling, for it obligates one to action. It is essential to the good life. It is doing what everyone *can do*. It is a beautiful principle to observe in action.

While I was in the mission field a few years ago, I observed one of the missionaries who always had people to teach and baptize. Wherever he went, he went with such commitment, happiness, and love for others that he was accepted. It was said of him that when he would come back into an area, many of the people would peek through their windows just to get a glimpse of this unusual young man. Though he was not particularly gifted in language skills, he succeeded in bearing a strong testimony to thousands of people.

Again, like my friend, he only did what everybody *could do*, but usually doesn't.

A commitment to the Savior

Once commitment is understood as a binding principle of the gospel of Jesus Christ, a committed person is able to call on heavenly powers and healings. Like the waters behind the mighty dam, these powers transform his personal world.

An early American prophet counseled us how important our commitment is to the Savior:

"And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall

send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall" (Hel. 5:12).

When we commit ourselves to him, we receive the inner peace and security he promised: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you" (John 14:27). When we are committed to him, we bind him to bless us, for he said: "I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say;" and conversely "but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise" (D&C 82:10).

A newspaper once received this question from a reader: "What would be the most important news the world could receive?" After much careful deliberation the editor answered: "To know that Jesus Christ lives today." This would be the most important news anyone could know.

We bear a solemn witness to you that he does live. He restored and directs his church through a prophet of God. The priesthood and the principles of the gospel have been restored to bless all who commit them into their lives. We invite all to make a personal commitment this day from the things you have heard to study these doctrines and earnestly ask our Father in Heaven if they are true.

A commitment to our families

As we commit ourselves to the Lord and his principles, we are led to share them with our families. The family is eternal. We may be sealed together forever in a patriarchal order if we are righteous. This knowledge we willingly and anxiously share with the world because of the joy we feel. We affirm that every life is sa-

cred and important. Every child is a gift and a blessing. The home is an institution of learning, of loving—to develop the capacities of each of its members to live in accordance to the laws of God. We testify that these laws are eternal and unchanging. A personal commitment to this priority is paramount. Nothing can surpass the inner security of having one's family committed to God.

A busy father, businessman, and Church leader told me a few years ago that he loved his family so much that he made this commitment: he would give several nights each week and part of every Saturday to them. They were programmed into his schedule. The gospel helped him to understand the importance of this priority. Then, though fatigue, business, Church, and other requirements pressed him every day, he followed this commitment. For him, it was an irrevocable obligation, a looked-for pleasure to be with and nurture his family. He did what every father *could and must do*—but sometimes doesn't do.

Prophets in all ages have counseled families to pray, study, work, and play together, to bind ourselves together in all holiness. It is and ever will be the answer to happiness, peace, and unity in this world. But it takes a commitment to do so—to do all we can. Knowing is not enough! It takes a personal commitment to be "anxiously engaged," to do *everything* possible.

And may I reccho a thought expressed by another? Never give up trying to reach a loved one—never, never, never. The blessings of heaven may be realized after the prayers and personal commitment of the righteous. When one is totally committed to *this* endeavor, there is a greater inner strength. We not only love more, but we help more. Can any member forget the story told yesterday by Elder Perry about an anxious prophet-father, Alma, who

received the blessing of a changed son?

A commitment to others

One man who had committed himself to do everything he could to share the gospel with others walked out of his office one day and saw a man running down the hall. He learned this man had stapled his finger. He reached into his big pocket, pulled out Merthiolate and a Band-Aid, and dressed the wound. The shocked individual asked in amazement why he did this. He responded: "I am a Mormon, and Mormons do these things." This man was prepared to help another whenever possible.

In a stake conference a number of speakers mentioned a certain man. After the session the General Authority met the man. He learned from others that more than fifty people had joined the Church because of him. The way he kept his yard, his home, his happiness, his good deeds to his neighbors all brought him opportunities to tell others how the gospel had blessed his life.

These two men had just committed themselves to do what *everyone can do*.

I know, after many interviews, that many long to become part of the assembly of the blessed. Many times they cry out in the night for help, not knowing where to turn, how to begin. Their eternal spirits seek help. As social beings we need each other. The commitment to reach out to them is a binding invitation from the Savior. When this is done in love, we may help redeem them. It is infinitely more than just confessing Jesus Christ—it is *doing* what needs to be done.

Church leaders and home teachers have special opportunities to help. The object of all their work, meetings, faith, and prayers will be to help each individual and family.

A sister in France who joined the Church was approached by her former minister who asked her how she could possibly have done such a thing. Her response was beautiful and reassuring. It shows us how important our collective commitment is to serve others. She said that at least once every month leaders or members of the Church would visit her. They looked after her spiritual and temporal needs. She told her former minister that since she had been baptized as a baby, the only time she had been visited by anyone from her former church was this day, and that visit was only to inquire about her membership.

A total commitment to anxiously serve the Lord and others is the surest way to overcome the many temptations of the adversary.

Everyone who truly commits himself to the gospel finds his life expanding and his appreciation growing for all good things. His acknowledgment of God and his wondrous creations intensifies. The Lord described how this process works in a revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith in May 1831:

"That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day" (D&C 50:24).

Brothers and sisters, a committed person makes goodness look attractive. He builds an inner confidence as he learns light and truth and then practices it. He becomes more like our prophet today, Spencer W. Kimball, who over a lifetime has translated desire into firm commitment to do everything he can do to demonstrate his love for the Lord and all of His children.

We, too, can resolve this day to declare ourselves, give ourselves, devote ourselves; to commit ourselves to do what *everyone can do*. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

We have just listened to Elder James M. Paramore, a member of the

First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will now address us.

Elder David B. Haight

I must admit that my heart beat a little faster with spiritual emotion as the choir was singing "The Morning Breaks; the Shadows Flee," one of the great, stirring hymns of the Church. You will recall that Parley P. Pratt, one of the Twelve sent to Great Britain by the Prophet Joseph Smith to assist in opening the work abroad, composed those words. They were to help explain the true gospel message to the world. He penned,

*"The morning breaks; the shadows
flee;
Lo, Zion's standard is unfurled!
The dawning of a brighter day."
(Hymns, no. 269.)*

Missionary work

The morning light of the gospel is spreading over the world, the shadows of darkness are disappearing, the majesty of his work is bursting forth. Tens of thousands are accepting the gospel of salvation.

A few months ago we drove along the coast of Chile with President Lester Haymore—then president of the Chile Osorno Mission—and Sister Haymore. As we visited cities and drove from village to village, we saw the fruits of our missionary proselyting efforts. We met with many new members, and we were deeply impressed with their faith and humble desire to learn more about the gospel they have accepted. As we continued the journey, our concern centered on ways we could help prevent this growing number of new

members from feeling like strangers or foreigners, and help them become fellow citizens with the Saints. How can we help in strengthening their faith so that they can hold on to the iron rod and continue to grow in knowledge?

Mature couples needed

We reflected on the many priesthood, Relief Society, and Sunday School classes where husbands and wives who have been trained in the gospel—many with unusual talents—were not now being fully used. Some stakes are crowded with mature couples fully prepared to accept a mission call, who could not only enthusiastically help in spreading the gospel but strengthen new members in areas of the world where we are growing so rapidly. The thousands of newly baptized members now in the Church, with its somewhat strange, unfamiliar ways, could be encouraged and trained by someone who today is sitting comfortably at home. We thought, if we could only transplant hundreds of our faithful, well-prepared couples out into one of the greatest chapters of their lives!

Amulek taught: "And he shall come into the world to redeem his people" (Al. 11:40). Must we not encourage and hold together "his people" and help prepare them for his coming?

Some generally think that full-time missionary service is only for younger, unmarried men and women. However, a new social pattern is

emerging. The number of men and women retiring from active employment or from professions is continually increasing, at what President Kimball or Elder LeGrand Richards would consider a very early age.

Recently in the mail was a query from friends in California, now retiring from schoolteaching, who indicated a desire to return to Utah and who asked, "What can we do for the Church when we return?"

My answer was, "Don't come to Utah. Your church experience is needed out in the world. Brush up on your Norwegian that you learned as a missionary years ago." I understand they will soon be on their way. He is thrilled with this opportunity to serve a second mission, and this time he will have an added blessing of keeping the same companion for his entire mission.

Many couples are prepared and waiting for the bishop to extend a mission call. Perhaps the bishop, busy with other duties, has overlooked them. Couples who have a desire to serve the Lord need not wait for the bishop, but should knock on his door and say, "We feel we are ready to go."

Brother and Sister Fossum

Recently in Mexico I had the opportunity of meeting a wonderful, mature missionary couple, Brother and Sister John Fossum, who commented, "Our greatest need is for trained leadership. Married couples with years of experience in church work could literally work miracles. We have twenty-two scattered branches without, as yet, an organization to train the branch leaders. We are so new and growing so rapidly, and leaders with experience are not available."

The Fossums continued, "Many blessings have come to us as a result of our mission—blessings we always receive from the Lord whenever we serve without restraint." They added,

"People shrivel up and die in beds and rocking chairs. We didn't want that kind of retirement; the Lord knew we wanted to go on a mission, and we received the call."

Some couples, they continued, "imagine they can't live without their families close by, and some fear for their own physical well-being. It was reassuring when our stake president set us apart, and he promised us that the Lord would look after our family and that we would have good health to the end of our mission." They continued, "At our age it is difficult to live up to missionary schedules, but we have found it is possible, and it has its rewards."

And then Brother Fossum said, "Fifty years ago I served a mission in Hawaii and learned to speak Hawaiian. It was difficult then, and it was difficult at our age to go through the Missionary Training Center and learn Spanish; but we did it and it has been a great learning experience. The spiritual treasures alone are worth the effort."

Sister Fossum said, "It's really hard on grandmas to be away from twenty-six grandchildren, but I'm coming through with flying colors—sometimes at half-mast, but they are flying!"

This dedicated couple concluded: "A mission for those of mature years is a rich, rewarding experience. It's for those who want to *live out* their retirement and not just *exist*."

Now we need more—many more—couples like the Fossums who are willing, wondering and asking, "What can I do for the Lord?" and willing to use part of their golden years in this vital service.

In the early days of the Church, the Lord's work urgently required sacrifice and the best efforts of the Saints. A company of brethren commanded to leave their families and go to Missouri in 1831 were admonished:

"Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great.

"Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days," (D&C 64:33-34.)

Prepare now for mission

Now to you mature couples: don't wait until your retirement dinner and the traditional gold watch to make plans, but let's start now. Prepare for what may be the most rewarding experience of your life. Why not begin now to expand your horizons; plan to increase your knowledge and learn another language. You can start with Spanish or German. President Kimball is suggesting Mandarin Chinese.

My wife, Ruby, after a fifty-year lapse, is back at the university taking Spanish 101. Hard work? Of course! Long hours of study to keep up? Many! Who does the cooking? Sometimes I do. Rewarding? I'm so proud of her when she bears a humble testimony that our members in Argentina or Mexico can understand.

Experienced couples assist with compassion

We are witnessing a continuing unfolding of the Lord's work in this, the last dispensation. Millions are waiting and want to improve their lives. President Kimball is asking for more mature couples. They are needed everywhere, particularly experienced members with family ties to other lands. A spiritual rebirth can be yours as you serve the Lord in total service. Prayer will have a deeper dimension, and the scriptures will be pondered and more deeply appreciated. The Holy Ghost will be-

come more evident; your capacity to love will increase; your families at home will be blessed, and they will be proud of your selfless service to the Lord.

Moroni, the Book of Mormon prophet, taught of the careful attention given to the newly baptized then:

"And after they had been received unto baptism, and were wrought upon and cleansed by the power of the Holy Ghost, they were *numbered among the people* of the church of Christ; and *their names were taken, that they might be remembered and nourished* by the good word of God, to keep them in the right way, to keep them continually watchful unto prayer" (Moro. 6:4; italics added).

In many areas of the world we have converts that need to be remembered with care and love and encouraged and kept in the right way, as Moroni stated. But the couples with the experience who could assist are usually living elsewhere. We need the help of seasoned Church members who can provide the training, encouragement, and, above all, the compassionate concern.

To show what can be accomplished with such love and dedication, let me share with you again the words of the Fossums. They said, "To visit one of our branches we get up at 4:00 A.M. on Sunday to catch an early bus. Sister Fossum started a little music class with the sisters during the priesthood hour. She taught the basics of directing music and discovered a thirteen-year-old girl with a perfect sense of time, who now leads the singing in sacrament meeting. Now that branch has a chorister."

Brother Fossum said, "I was invited to attend their branch presidency meeting to show how we do some things. A few months ago in this same branch, home teaching and visiting teaching were just words in a book. But now nine pairs of home

teachers are making their visits, and they will soon have visiting teaching underway. These are incidental rewards. The great rewards come with the service we give and the love we feel for the humble new members that result in a change in their lives for the better—then we, too, are enriched."

"Feed my sheep"

We appeal this day to you who have been prepared line upon line and precept upon precept—to go forth into the world. Put your hand to the plow. Bless new members with your love and your faith, helping them to keep in the right way and teaching them to be watchful and prayerful and reliant upon Christ, the author of our faith. Did not the Savior teach Peter, and through Peter us, as he pointed to the nets full of fish on the shore and said, "Lovest thou me more than these?"

And Peter replied, "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee."

"Feed my lambs."

Again, the second time, "Lovest thou me?"

"Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee."

"Feed my sheep."

He said unto him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" Peter, now grieved because the Savior had asked the third time, "Lovest thou me?" said, "Lord,

thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."

Jesus said unto him, "Feed my sheep." (See John 21:15-17.)

To us of his church, isn't the duty clear: forever to "feed my sheep," his followers, those who have accepted his gospel? They are his. Isn't he saying they are dear to him? You are stronger and your faith is firm. Be a friend to those who are new. "Feed my lambs," he is saying to us.

May many of us who are fully prepared and needing the blessings put aside the things of the world and become shepherds to the flock and lose ourselves in his service. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

Following Elder Haight's remarks, the Choir sang "The Last Words of David" without announcement.

President Spencer W. Kimball

We have just listened to Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing, "The Last Words of David."

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, who will be our concluding speaker.

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley

Peter

As we approach the end of this morning of inspiration, I should like to take you, for a moment, back to that most dreadful night in and about Jerusalem when the Last Supper was

concluded. Jesus and his disciples left the city and went over to the Mount of Olives. Knowing that his terrible ordeal was at hand, he spoke with those he loved. And he said to them: "All ye

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Second Day

shall be offended [that is, shall fall away] because of me this night. . . .

"Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.

"Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

"Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." (Matt. 26:31, 33-36.)

There followed shortly thereafter the terrible agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, and then the betrayal. As the procession moved to the court of Caiaphas, "Peter followed . . . unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end" (Matt. 26:58).

While the mockery of that trial was going on and Jesus' accusers spit on him, and buffeted him, and smote him with the palms of their hands, a damsel, seeing Peter, said: "Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.

"But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

"And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

"And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

"And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.

"Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

"And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. *And he went out, and wept bitterly.*" (Matt. 26:69-75; italics added.)

What pathos there is in those words! Peter, affirming his loyalty, his determination, his resolution, said that he would never deny. But the

fear of men came upon him and the weakness of his flesh overtook him, and under the pressure of accusation, his resolution crumbled. Then, recognizing his wrong and weakness, "he went out, and wept."

Tragedy of high aim, low achievement

As I have read this account my heart goes out to Peter. So many of us are so much like him. We pledge our loyalty; we affirm our determination to be of good courage; we declare, sometimes even publicly, that come what may we will do the right thing, that we will stand for the right cause, that we will be true to ourselves and to others.

Then the pressures begin to build. Sometimes these are social pressures. Sometimes they are personal appetites. Sometimes they are false ambitions. There is a weakening of the will. There is a softening of discipline. There is capitulation. And then there is remorse, self-accusation, and bitter tears of regret.

One of the great tragedies we witness almost daily is the tragedy of men of high aim and low achievement. Their motives are noble. Their proclaimed ambition is praiseworthy. Their capacity is great. But their discipline is weak. They succumb to indolence. Appetite robs them of will.

I think of such a man I once knew, not a member of the Church. He was a graduate of a great university. His potential was unlimited. As a young man with an excellent education and a tremendous opportunity, he dreamed of the stars and moved in their direction. In the company which employed him in those early years, he was promoted from one responsibility to another, each with improved opportunity over the last. Before many years had passed, he was in the top echelon of his company. But those promotions brought him into

the cocktail circuit. He could not handle it, as so many others cannot. He became an alcoholic, the victim of an appetite he could not control. He sought help but was too proud to discipline himself in the regimen imposed upon him by those who tried to assist him.

He went down like a falling star, tragically burning out and disappearing in the night. I made inquiry of one friend after another, and finally learned the truth of his tragic end. He, who had begun with such high aim and impressive talent, had died on skid row in one of our large cities. Like Peter of old he had felt certain of his strength and of his capacity to live up to his potential. But he had denied that capacity; and I am confident that as the shadows of his failure closed around him, again like Peter, he must have gone out and wept bitterly.

I think of another. I knew him well. He joined the Church when long ago I was a missionary in the British Isles. He had a smoking habit. He prayed for strength in that springtime of his Church membership and the Lord answered his prayer and gave him power to overcome his habit. He looked to God and lived with a joy he never had previously known. But something happened. Family and social pressures were brought against him. He lowered his vision and gave way to his appetite. The smell of burning tobacco seduced him. I saw him some years later. We talked together of the old and better days he had known. And he, like Peter, wept bitterly. He blamed this and he blamed that, and, as he did so, I was inclined to repeat the words of Cassius—

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,

But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

(Julius Caesar, act 1, sc. 2, lines 140-41.)

And so I might continue telling you of those who begin with noble objectives, but then slow down, or of those who are strong starters and weak finishers. So many in the game of life get to first base, or second, or even third, but then fail to score. They are inclined to live unto themselves, denying their generous instincts, grasping for possessions and in their self-centered, uninspired living, sharing neither talent nor faith with others. Of them the Lord has said: "And this shall be your lamentation in the day of visitation, and of judgment, and of indignation: The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and my soul is not saved!" (D&C 56:16).

But more particularly, I wish to say a word concerning those who, like Peter, profess love for the Lord and his work and then, either with voice or by silence, deny him.

Loss of faith

I recall so well a young man of great faith and devotion. He was my friend and my mentor during a sensitive period of my life. The manner of his living and the enthusiasm of his service were evidence of his love for the Lord and for the work of the Church. But he was slowly led away by the flattery of associates who saw in him the means of their own advancement in the affairs in which they were engaged together. Rather than lead them in the direction of his own faith and behavior, he slowly succumbed to their enticings in the opposite direction.

He never spoke in defiance of the faith he had lived by. That was not necessary. His altered manner was testimony enough of his having forsaken it. The years passed, and then I met him again. He spoke as one disillusioned. With lowered voice and lowered eyes, he told of his drifting when he cut himself loose from the anchor of his once-

treasured faith. Then, concluding his narrative, like Peter, he wept.

The other day I was speaking with a friend concerning a mutual acquaintance, a man looked upon as highly successful in his vocation. "But what of his activity in the Church?" I asked. To which my friend responded, "He knows in his heart that it is true, but he is afraid of it. He is fearful that if he were to acknowledge his Church membership and live its standards, he would be cut off from the social circle in which he moves."

I reflected, "Like Peter who denied his own sure knowledge, the day will come, though possibly not until old age, when in hours of quiet reflection this man will know that he traded his birthright for a mess of pottage (see Gen. 25:34); and there will be remorse and sorrow and tears, for he will come to see that he not only denied the Lord in his own life, but also in effect denied him before his children who have grown up without a faith to cling to."

The Lord himself said, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38).

Peter repents, proves faithful

Now, in conclusion, may I go back to Peter who denied and wept. Recognizing his error, repenting of his weakness, he turned about and became a mighty voice in bearing witness of the risen Lord. He, the senior apostle, dedicated the remainder of his life to testifying of the mission, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the living Son of the living God. He preached the moving sermon on the day of Pentecost when the multitude were touched in their hearts by the power

of the Holy Ghost. In the authority of the priesthood received from his Master, he, with John, healed the lame man, the miracle that brought on persecution. He fearlessly spoke for his brethren when they were arraigned before the Sanhedrin. His was the vision that led to carrying the gospel to the Gentiles. (See Acts 2-4, 10.)

He suffered chains and prison and a terrible martyr's death as a witness of Him who had called him from his nets to become a fisher of men (see Matt. 4:19). He remained faithful and true to the great and compelling trust given when the resurrected Lord in his final instructions to the eleven apostles charged them to go "and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). And he it was who, with James and John, came back to earth in this dispensation to restore the holy priesthood, under which divine authority the Church of Jesus Christ was organized in these latter days and under which same authority it now functions. These mighty works and many more unmentioned were done by Peter who once had denied and sorrowed, and then rose above that remorse to carry forward the work of the Savior following his ascension and to participate in the restoration of that work in this dispensation.

Resolve to return to truth

Now, if there be any within the sound of my voice today who by word or act have denied the faith, I pray that you may draw comfort and resolution from the example of Peter who, though he had walked daily with Jesus, in an hour of extremity denied both the Lord and the testimony which he carried in his own heart. But he rose above this, and became a mighty defender and a powerful advocate. So too, there is a

way for you to turn about, and add your strength and faith to the strength and faith of others in building the kingdom of God.

There sits in this hall today a man who grew up with love for the Church. But when he became involved in his business career, obsessed with ambition he began in effect to deny the faith. The manner of his living became almost a repudiation of his loyalty. Then fortunately, before he had gone too far, he heard the whisperings of the still, small voice. There came a saving sense of remorse. He turned around, and today he stands as the president of a great stake of Zion, while also serving as a senior officer in one of the leading industrial corporations of the nation and of the world.

My beloved brethren and sisters who may also have drifted, the Church needs you, and you need the Church. You will find many ears that will listen with understanding. There will be many hands to help you find your way back. There will be hearts to warm your own. There will be tears, not of bitterness but of rejoicing.

May the Lord touch you by the power of his Spirit to increase your desire. May he strengthen your resolution. May your joy be full and your peace sweet and satisfying as you return to that which you know in your heart is true, I humbly pray as I leave you my witness and testimony of him in whose name we serve, even the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Following Elder Hinckley's address, the Choir sang, "God So Loved the World," without announcement.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us, followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing, "God So Loved The World."

We appreciate the courtesies shown by the owners, and operators, of the many radio and television stations, who offered their facilities, as a public service, to make the proceedings of this Conference available to a large audience, throughout many areas of the world.

These services are being carried over radio to 72 stations in several countries of South America, and 65 stations in Australia. They are being broadcast over 180 television stations in the United States, and Canada, and over 800 cable television systems in the United States, by RCA Americam satellite.

The proceedings of this Conference have been carried, over direct oceanic cable, to hundreds of members, and friends, assembled in chapels throughout Great Britain, Germany, France, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, and Austria.

We shall conclude this fourth session of the Conference with the Tabernacle Choir singing, "High on the Mountain Top," after which the benediction will be pronounced by Elder Derek A. Cuthbert, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

This Conference will then be adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

The Choir sang, "High on The Mountain Top."

Elder Derek A. Cuthbert pronounced the benediction.

SECOND DAY AFTERNOON MEETING

FIFTH SESSION

The fifth, and concluding, session of the General Conference began at 2:00 P.M. on Sunday, April 1, 1979.

President Spencer W. Kimball presided at this session, and President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency, conducted it.

Music was furnished by the Tabernacle Choir, with Brother Jerold Ottley conducting, and Brother Robert Cundick at the organ.

President Tanner made the following remarks at the beginning of the meeting:

President N. Eldon Tanner

President Spencer W. Kimball, who presides at this and all other sessions of the Conference, has asked me to conduct this session.

We extend a sincere welcome to all assembled this afternoon in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, in the fifth, and concluding, session of the 149th Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We also welcome those seated in the Assembly Hall, and Salt Palace. Elders S. Dilworth Young and Robert E. Wells preside at the Assembly Hall, and Elders Adney Y. Komatsu and Hugh W. Pinnock preside at the Salt Palace.

Sessions of this Conference are being carried over hundreds of radio, and television, stations to a large audience in the United States, and many other parts of the world.

We send our greetings and blessings to members of the Church, and many friends everywhere, participating in these proceedings by radio, and television.

This morning's session was broadcast by oceanic cable to Europe, and heard by members assembled in many chapels in England, France, Germany, Austria, Holland, Switzerland, and Belgium.

The Tabernacle Choir, with Brother Jerold Ottley directing, and Brother Robert Cundick at the organ, is providing the music for this session. The Choir will begin this service by singing, "Come All Ye Saints Who Dwell." The invocation will be offered by Elder O. Leslie Stone, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The Choir sang the hymn, "Come All Ye Saints Who Dwell."

Elder O. Leslie Stone offered the invocation.

President Tanner

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing, "Hallelujah, Amen." Following the singing, we shall hear from Elder Marvin J. Ashton, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

"Hallelujah, Amen" was rendered by the Choir.

President Tanner

Elder Marvin J. Ashton, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will now address us.

He will be followed by Elder Loren C. Dunn, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and supervisor of the Australia-New Zealand Area.

Elder Marvin J. Ashton

Some weeks ago an unhappy mother, who had been left alone to care for herself and her three young children, indicated that she was not attending church anymore: "Why should I? I have lived in the same apartment now for more than four months and not one person has come to call on us."

Road blocks to progress

She seemed taken aback and surprised when, instead of saying, "I will have the bishop contact you promptly," I asked, "How many people have you visited since you moved into your new neighborhood?"

Many of us set up roadblocks to progress and contribute to our own unhappiness while we wait for others to seek us out and offer help. Negative attitudes lived with today cause stagnation, misery, and bitterness tomorrow. It is unproductive for those who should be anxiously engaged in seeking the abundant life to nurse personal hurts. We are all God's children. If we love Him, we will feed His sheep wherever they may be found, without regard as to our own personal plight or situation. Often we can best feed others when we are hungry ourselves or not completely comfortable in the fold that we presently occupy. Very often those who are hungry, helpless, and cold can best be rescued by those who have been through the same exposures. Marking time or stalling should not be indulged in by the weak, weary, uncertain, and unrecognized. Instead, there is a healing power as we use our energy in action, in service, and in lifting others.

It was Booker T. Washington who wisely stated, "Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed." (*The Inter-*

national Dictionary of Thoughts, comp. by John P. Bradley and others, Chicago: J. G. Ferguson Publishing Company, 1969, p. 698.) Victories in life come through our ability to work around and over the obstacles that cross our path. We grow stronger as we climb our own mountains.

"The brightest crowns that are worn in heaven have been tried, and smelted, polished and glorified through the furnace of tribulation" according to Thomas Carlyle (*Vital Quotations*, Emerson Roy West, comp., Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968, p. 312).

Let me share four basic contributing factors which might prevent our personal progress and church activity: (1) the constant nursing of personal hurts, (2) yielding to the sorrow of tragedy and grief, (3) being fettered with the habits and mistakes of misconduct, (4) letting fears inhibit progress.

Let us ponder these enemies of eternal progress and seek ways of gathering the courage to cast them aside.

Nursing personal hurts

The constant nursing of personal hurts. Each of us should daily resolve that with God's help we will not allow careless words from others to shape our destiny or control our daily course. How tragic it is to see, on occasion, a life of usefulness lost because we have allowed an unkind comment to cause a wound or hurt. We let the injury become an open sore and fester rather than treat it with prompt skill and maturity. Some try to get even with their offenders by dropping out of life's race. How weak, how damaging, how self-restricting is the often used statement, "I'll never go back as long as

that person is there!" On occasion some of us seem to stand on the sidelines waiting to be hurt, offended, or ignored. We listen for careless words from others and remember the unsaid *hellos* and read into the said or unsaid words a totally unintended message.

One of the finest basketball players of all time was asked what had contributed the most to his outstanding success. His answer was, "I learned to play in pain. Although injuries, bruises, and bumps came, I never allowed myself the luxury of slowing down or quitting."

The greatest teacher and leader also showed the world an example of proper conduct when He was the victim of unkind words and cruel deeds. He simply said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

During his earthly mission Jesus made every confrontation a learning experience, including those that would be destructive or cause hurt and dissatisfaction. He was never rebellious, never ashamed; always long-suffering, patient, kindly; and never deterred in being about His Father's business. He, too, proved His greatness when His personal pain and suffering were the most intense. Hurting words and unkind deeds never kept Him from reaching His goals. No one can meet life in all its fullness without experiencing hurt, pain, and suffering.

The wise person will avoid the flood of bitterness and hatred that can be caused by the waters of hurt. He will constantly pursue the Savior's paths without stopping at this roadblock caused by apparent or real injustices. It is up to us to go forward and not confuse or confound ourselves. Those of us who cannot forgive and forget break the bridges over which we must pass. Too often we allow incidents to contribute to our stagnation when we permit ourselves to feel ignored, unwanted, or

unworthy. How damaging sympathy is when it is self-administered. How refreshing it is to meet people who don't have time to be offended. Certainly what we are is more important than what we have or what is said of us.

Yielding to sorrow

Yielding to the sorrow of tragedy and grief. Too often the tragic loss of a child, husband, wife, mother, father, or other loved ones becomes a turning point in life. Some yield to the damaging thought that if there be an all-wise and loving Eternal Father, how could He allow this to happen to me and mine? We allow the heartache to break the band and strengthening tie to Him who has promised to see us successfully through our Gethsemanes. Some of us in our moments of greatest despair turn away in bitterness from the arm of strength, comfort, and peace. Sometimes in our darkest hours we lose sight of the light as we dwell upon the unanswerable questions: "Why does God permit this to happen to me or to our family? What have we done to deserve this?"

This incident was shared by Lucile F. Johnson of Orem, Utah: "There was an attractive lady whose company everyone sought and enjoyed. She was a delight to be around because she seemed to love life and people to the fullest. One day I said to her, 'You are such a joy to all of us. What is your secret? Can you tell me?'

"'Yes,' she answered. 'One word changed my life.'

"'And what was that word?' I queried.

"'Malignant!' Startled, I heard this explanation: 'The doctor said that word to me and told me I had a limited time to live. I had a choice. I could make everyone miserable or I could try to make others happy. On my knees I realized that I had one

day at a time just as everyone else has. I was able to see things I had never seen. My husband, my children, each person took on a beauty you can't believe. I know that life is a gift whether it be a day or a year and I intend to enjoy my gift to the maximum.' "

Whether the works of God are manifest in healings or in the exhibition of courage and acceptance by those challenged must be left to the ultimate wisdom of Him who comprehendeth all things. How refreshing and strengthening are the lives of those who push upward and onward despite tragedies and griefs.

*One ship drives east and another
drives west
With the selfsame winds that blow.
'Tis the set of the sails
And not the gales
Which tells us the way to go.*

*Like the winds of the sea are the
ways of fate,
As we voyage along through life:
'Tis the set of a soul
That decides its goal,
And not the calm or the strife.*
(Ella Wheeler Wilcox, "The Winds of Fate," *Masterpieces of Religious Verse*, James Dalton Morrison, ed., New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1948, p. 314.)

Habits

Being fettered with habits and mistakes of misconduct. A friend of mine who only in recent months has made giant steps toward purposeful living and complete activity in the Church shared the following: "I can tell you as one who has had many years of experience and practice that it is much easier to criticize individuals and knock the establishment than it is to change oneself and recognize the real causes for one's own inactivity and negativism."

Change is hard. Rather than going through the struggle to overcome

a bad habit or rectify a mistake, some of us choose to make excuses for inactivity. Progress comes as we are able to give up something for something we want more. Honesty with oneself and setting of desirable but attainable goals day by day can determine the paths we follow. One might make a list of goals and then a price list for each goal. One day at a time the price of change can be paid. The cost will then not be overwhelming.

The Lord has promised that he will forgive and remember no more when the process of repentance is complete. If the Lord will do that for us, why should we not so do for ourselves? Mistakes can be forgiven. Habits can be changed. One more roadblock to progress can be removed.

In contrast to this process, how discouraging it is to witness someone who lives with damaging habits and who resists taking personal steps toward better self-management. William James said, "That which holds the attention determines the action" (*Vital Quotations*, Emerson Roy West, comp. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968, p. 5). The truly repentant will put their mistakes behind, learn from them, and turn their attention from them to actions that bring progress and growth. How comforting it is to know that God will take us by the hand and lift us to new levels of attitude and achievement if we will but let Him. What a sweet, personal victory it is to recognize misdirection in one's own life and to pay the price that then lets us walk in His paths.

Fears

Letting fears inhibit progress. Fear is another roadblock which may stop our eternal progress. It keeps us from attempting anything significant because we are afraid of failure or rejection. We won't accept opportu-

nities for service in the Church or in the community because we might make a mistake.

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7). What a tragedy it is in our lives when we are afraid to try, afraid to make decisions, afraid to trust the Lord, or even afraid to make an error in judgment. Oh, that we could remember the great teaching of the Savior to Peter when fear caused him to fail to walk and to even sink.

"But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

"And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

"And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

"But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

"And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

"And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

"But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

"And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matt. 14:24-31.)

Fears in our lives can be con-

quered if we will but have faith and move forward with purpose.

Nothing impossible with God's help

To reemphasize: the constant nursing of personal hurts is a crutch for those who would move with hesitation, if at all. Yielding to the pains of tragedy and grief deters self-development and takes away the opportunity for triumph over trying obstacles. Being fettered with habits and mistakes of misconduct relegates a person to being a victim of his errors. Letting fears inhibit progress is but another evidence of one's unwillingness to try because of the fear of failure. Roadblocks to eternal progress are cast aside when resolves are made that no man needs to walk alone. It is a happy day when we come to know that with God's help nothing is impossible for us.

May we strive for that day and knowledge, I humbly pray. God does live. He does hear and answer our prayers. To these truths I leave my testimony and witness. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Marvin J. Ashton, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us.

We shall now hear from Elder Loren C. Dunn, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and supervisor of the Australia-New Zealand Area.

He will be followed by elder Theodore M. Burton, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and supervisor of the Europe Area.

Elder Loren C. Dunn

The most unique feature of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is that it is governed by the Savior, through the promptings and direction of the Spirit.

Those called to serve will prayerfully seek the inspiration of the Spirit to supplement and even go before their own natural abilities. Whenever the Church is upon the

earth, there is always this reference to the Spirit as a guide. This is true, no matter what the background of the leaders might be.

Paul

Two classic examples of this are Paul, the great New Testament prophet, and Brigham Young, the second president of the Church. Paul was a Pharisee and a pupil of Gamaliel. In addition to this, he was a member of the Sanhedrin. If anyone could approach his work with the credentials of an intellectual and a scholar, he could. Yet after his conversion, he was very careful to draw a distinction between these two approaches. In his letter to the Corinthians, he said:

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (See 1 Cor. 2:11-14.)

Brigham Young

Brigham Young was a pragmatist, level-headed and down-to-earth. A glazier by trade, he became the second president of the Church after the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith. He led the Saints into a trackless waste and kept them from perishing until they forged a new life by making the desert blossom as the rose (see Isa. 35:1). He recognized the practical and sensible aspects of religious life and service to God; yet from this down-to-earth, practical prophet come these words:

"The eye, the ear, the hand, all the senses may be deceived, but the Spirit of God cannot be deceived; and when inspired with that Spirit, the whole man is filled with knowl-

edge, he can see with a spiritual eye, and he knows that which is beyond the power of man to controvert" (*Journal of Discourses*, 16:46).

We learn from these two great prophets that there is need to go beyond the word and find the power and strength that can come from the Spirit.

The Holy Ghost

When we speak of the Spirit, we refer to the gift of the Holy Ghost. While the light of Christ enlightens all who come into the world, the spirit of the Holy Ghost is something more. The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead; a personage of spirit, he speaks not for himself, but testifies to all that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and conveys to man the mind and will of the Lord (see John 16:13-15). He has a sanctifying and cleansing influence upon the souls of men and is the source of spiritual gifts. Just as Ephesians tells us that there is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism (see Eph. 4:5), so this gift of the Holy Ghost can only come in one way. Only the right authority is acceptable for baptism and conferring the gift of the Holy Ghost, and this was made clear when Paul traveled to Ephesus and rebaptized some who had not been baptized with the right authority and then conferred upon them the Holy Ghost (see Acts 19).

While the Spirit of the Holy Ghost will witness to a person that this is the gospel of Jesus Christ, the gift of the Holy Ghost comes only after a person has been baptized into the Church. It can be identified with feelings of peace and assurance to the prayerful and honest seeker for truth, and thus the scripture:

"Yea, behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart" (D&C 8:2). "Therefore, you shall feel that it is right" (D&C 9:8).

Become spiritually conditioned

Some think that our ultimate judgment and reward will be based on how many laws and commandments we keep and how many we do not keep. While in a sense this is true, it misses the broader and spiritual purpose for keeping the commandments. When I was younger, I lived to play basketball. It was on my mind constantly. I spent countless hours practicing. Gradually I began to go through the moves automatically, without thinking about them. Physically and mentally I had become conditioned to do certain things by instinct. I had practiced them until they became natural to me.

In like manner, we keep the commandments and teachings of the gospel in order to condition us spiritually. It is not a matter of how many laws we keep and how many we do not keep. We keep the commandments because they are the laws that govern the Spirit. The Spirit in turn will sanctify us, condition us spiritually, and eventually prepare us to live in the kingdom where God is. Hence the scripture: "They who are not sanctified through the law which I have given unto you, even the law of Christ, must inherit another kingdom" (D&C 88:21). The laws that govern the Spirit are nothing more nor less than the laws that govern the Church. In addition, there is also an outpouring of the Spirit for those loyal and willing to uphold the prophet and others who have been called to preside.

That the Spirit can and should have power in our lives and that we can have definite and measurable experiences associated with the Spirit is quite clear. One need only refer to the great variety of gifts of the Spirit promised to all who live the laws and commandments of Christ.

We should seek the Spirit through the prayer of faith and

through keeping the commandments, including partaking of the sacrament worthily, so that we might "have his Spirit to be with [us]" (D&C 20:79).

"Have ye spiritually been born of God?"

The sons of Mosiah, for instance, were fasting and praying in preparation for their mission to the Lamanites; they wanted a portion of the Spirit of the Lord to go with them and abide with them. The answer is recorded in this verse: "And it came to pass that the Lord did visit them with his Spirit, and said unto them: Be comforted. And they were comforted" (Al. 17:10). Would you not be comforted if the Lord, by his Spirit, gave you the same experience?

The prophet Alma says: "And now behold, I ask of you, my brethren of the church, have ye spiritually been born of God? Have ye received his image in your countenances? Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts?" (Al. 5:14.)

Alma was making sure that the members of the Church had not just received the gift of the Holy Ghost, but also had truly received the sanctifying and cleansing power of that great Spirit. He said the way you can tell is when you become refreshed spiritually, as if you had been born anew. He said that the feelings and attitudes of your heart will be truly changed for the good. That your very appearance will begin to take upon itself the image of Christ.

Power of the Holy Spirit

What a great and powerful friend is this gift of the Holy Ghost! Certainly all who will turn to the Savior and abide by his laws will be healed by this Spirit (see 3 Ne. 9:13). They will have the mind of Christ (see 1 Cor. 2:16), they will be "partakers of the divine nature" (2

Pet. 1:4), they will begin to have the image of Christ in their countenances (see Al. 5:14). Truly the gospel comes, as Paul said, not only in word, "but also in power," the sanctifying, cleansing, soul-enlarging power of the Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 1:5).

After the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Brigham Young had a dream in which Joseph Smith appeared to him with the following advice: "Tell the brethren to keep their hearts open to conviction, so that when the Holy Ghost comes to them, their hearts will be ready to receive it. They can tell the Spirit of the Lord from all other spirits; it will whisper peace and joy to their souls; it will take malice, hatred, strife and all evil from their hearts; and their whole desire will be to do good, bring forth righteousness and build up the kingdom of God. Tell the brethren if they will follow the spirit of the Lord they will go right. Be sure to tell the people to keep the Spirit," he said. (Elden J. Watson, comp., *Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1846-47*, Salt Lake City, 1971, pp. 529-30.)

The Spirit sanctifies, prepares us to meet Christ

And these final words from the Doctrine and Covenants: "Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will" (D&C 88:68).

And thus we have the end result of the workings of the Spirit, to bring us face to face with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer.

Loyalty to the prophets and prayerful obedience to the word of God will bring the power of the Spirit. The enlarging influence of the Spirit will sanctify us, will condition

us spiritually, and prepare us to see Him face to face and converse as one speaketh to another, and to live in his kingdom, even the celestial kingdom.

The witness of the Holy Ghost

As born by those who know

Has lifted me again to thee,

O Father of my soul.

While listening to them testify,

The Spirit fills my heart,

Dispells the gloom, Confirms the right.

Pure truth it does impart.

I know that thou art in thy heav'n,

I know the Savior reigns;

I know a prophet speaks to us

For our eternal gain.

The Holy Spirit moves all doubt

It lights the heart of man.

It says to all, "return to me,

Come follow my great plan."

My eyes are wet, my heart is full,

The Spirit speaks today.

Oh Lord, wilt thou my life renew

And in my bosom stay.

As testimony fills my heart,

It dulls the pain of days;

For one brief moment heaven's view

Is fixed before my gaze.

May the Lord help us to reach beyond the words of life and to capture this great spirit, I pray. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Loren C. Dunn, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and supervisor of the Australia-New Zealand Area, has just spoken to us.

We shall now hear from Elder Theodore M. Burton, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and supervisor of the Europe area.

He will be followed by Elder Marion D. Hanks, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Theodore M. Burton

My brothers, sisters, and friends, when the First Presidency invited me to speak at this conference, I asked myself: "What message do the people of Europe most need to hear?" These conference messages will be broadcast and this is my opportunity to speak to them. At the same time it appeared to me that their most basic need might well coincide with the fundamental need of people all over the earth.

The principles of love

The basic need in Europe is for the people to be taught true principles of love. I speak of love as meaning a lack of personal selfishness. True love is the exact opposite of the present philosophy of selfishness which seems to permeate the world. Selfish interests color people's dealings with each other and even color person-to-person contact within the family.

True love is based on personal unselfishness, but our modern world does not seem to understand this. Modern man has lost his capacity to love. Jesus warned us that one of the principal characteristics of the last days would be that love among the people would gradually die. Jesus said, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Jos. Smith 1:10; see also Matt. 24:12). My thesis is that the iniquity of which he spoke is based on personal selfishness. That is the reason why love among the people is dying.

Jesus warned that iniquities in the last days would become so great "that, if possible, they shall deceive the very elect, who are the elect according to the covenant" (Jos. Smith 1:22; see also Matt. 24:24). I understand this to mean that eventually even the most faithful of the Lord's covenant Saints will become contaminated and threatened by modern-

day philosophies. I believe it is for this reason that unless these days are shortened none of us could long remain unaffected by such trends.

Avoid personal selfishness

It may well be that the present attitude of personal selfishness is the cause of most of the unhappiness with life among the people of the world. It shows up even in our daily occupations. For instance, when a person is offered a job, he seldom asks what opportunities the job offers to be of service to others. His first question is "What is there in this job for me?" The salary offered is too low. Having to move to or live in a given city is not convenient. He does not want to travel. He does not want to be confined to a desk, or he does not want to work such long hours. Before he even begins to work he asks, "What retirement benefits will I receive?" He is not interested in challenges, but only in security.

May I first speak to young people about personal selfishness in courtship? Actually, what is the main purpose for dating? Isn't it to get to know another person well enough to know what kind of a partner that person would be? Isn't it to learn to know that other person's character, interests, talents, and abilities? Or is dating merely an opportunity to satisfy one's passions? Each person will have to answer that question for himself. However, a sure guide would be to follow the words of the Savior: "Again I say unto you, let every man esteem his brother as himself" (D&C 38:25).

The necessity to practice unselfish love in courtship becomes imperative in marriage. Persons interested only in romance soon find the realisms of marriage too much to cope with. Yet in magazines and

books emphasis is placed on romance and material pleasures. This is almost the exclusive appeal of advertising. It is demonstrated over and over again in moving pictures and on television. It is the exclusive appeal of pornographic literature. People become conditioned by this exposure and grow up expecting only personal gratification in marriage. Personal selfishness is the main reason for the present high divorce rate throughout the world.

This desire for personal gratification results in disharmony in marriage. Couples interested only in themselves don't communicate. Lack of communication then becomes a major stumbling block in developing true love. Lack of communication coupled with the postponement of children is based on selfishness, as is the greater evil of abortion. We shudder as we read in Leviticus of the sacrifices of idol worshipers of that time who fed their children into the fiery maw of the iron god Molech. Is personal selfishness which results in abortion any less repulsive to God, as modern people through abortion offer the sacrifice of their children to their idol of selfish materialism?

In Europe families are limited to a point where couples are more or less ostracized by neighbors and friends if they have more than two children. Some European nations are even now beginning to decline in population as birth control and abortion become a way of life. Far too many wives are working in order that the couple may have its own home, a car, colored television, or extensive vacation trips. Children for such couples are an unwanted handicap and a needless expense.

Why bother to marry when children are neither wanted nor expected? Why burden oneself with marriage when couples expect to change partners when they tire of one another? What is the need for virtue

when one's goal is only self-satisfaction? If ever there was a need for the restoration of truth in a world where man is only interested in his own pleasure and self-gratification, it is now!

A gospel of love

As I see how many people, not only in Europe but everywhere, quarrel and antagonize one another, I understand better why Jesus continually emphasized the need for love. The gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of love. A life of love is not an easy life to live, especially when one lives in a world where strife with neighbors and strife within one's own family is so common. People have been hurt so often in the past that they are constantly on guard one against another. They have drawn a defensive circle around themselves so tightly it is difficult to penetrate. Yet they need to be taught love.

Strife in families leads to wife abuse and child abuse. This, too, comes through personal selfishness. It is so common in the world that we even find it creeping into the Church. As the Church grows rapidly we must teach love with increasing effectiveness. This is why our Church leaders continually caution home teachers to care for their families and "watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them;

"And see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other, neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking" (D&C 20:53-54).

Avoid contention

Jesus, out of pure unselfish love, gave his life for our sakes. Had he been as selfish as people are nowadays, there would have been no atonement. We would have been cut off from the presence of God forever and left to be carnal, sensual, and

devilish. But Jesus was not selfish. He prepared a way whereby every man and every woman may find personal happiness and great joy in life. That joy, however, must come in the Lord's way through unselfish love.

I understand now why Jesus always spoke out so strongly against disputations and contention. Contention is of the devil and not of God. I see the need for modern prophets to be in communication with God. I see their strivings to lead God's children toward truth and righteousness. Their message may be unpopular, but it is needed, for it is the only way to happiness. O people both within and without the Church, please realize that we are living in the last days. It is a day when love is waxing cold. People who will not listen to these warnings are preparing themselves for destruction. Jesus

Christ will soon come in power and glory. When he comes only those will be spared who have learned to love God and one another with all their heart, might, mind, and strength.

I testify that God lives, that Jesus is the risen Christ, and that God speaks to us today in the only way he can, through divinely called prophets who know the truth of these things. Please listen! In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Theodore M. Burton, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and supervisor of the Europe Area, has just addressed us.

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder Marion D. Hanks, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Marion D. Hanks

My testimony today is one of gratitude.

At a family gathering a few nights ago, we discussed the fact that today is the anniversary of our mother's birth.

I thought that night how much the generations owe each other, how much we learn from each other, how we should love and appreciate each other. One of mother's grandsons said he had watched with wonderment as his tiny daughter paged through her storybook, moistening her first finger to turn the pages as she had seen her daddy do as he read his books. Actually, she was moistening the finger on her left hand and turning the pages with the finger on her right hand! But that only served to emphasize both the power of example and the fact that she, like all the rest of us, is yet learning.

God loves all of his children

As I observed two of our lovely grown daughters that night an incident from the past came to mind that forms the burden of my brief message today. I still think of it with a tendency to tears. Another little girl had joined our family and was of course much loved. Occasionally I had called her older sister "Princess," but had thought about that, and, since the second young lady was equally deserving of royal treatment, had concluded that it would be well for her to share the title, if it were used at all.

So one day I called to her, "Come on, Princess. Let's go to the store for mother." She seemed not to hear. "Honey," her mother said, "daddy is calling you."

"Oh," she answered, with a quiet sadness that hurt my heart, "he doesn't mean me."

In memory I can still see the resignation on her innocent child face and hear it in her voice, when she thought that her father didn't mean her.

I am one who believes that God loves and will never cease to love all of his children, and that he will not cease to hope for us or reach for us or wait for us. In Isaiah it is written:

"And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you" (Isa. 30:18).

And yet over the earth, across the years, I have met some of God's choicest children who find it very difficult to believe in their hearts that he really means them. They know that he is the source of comfort and pardon and peace and that they must seek him and open the door for him and accept his love, and yet even in their extremity they find it difficult to believe that his promised blessings are for them. Some have offended God and their own consciences and are earnestly repentant but they find the way back blocked by their unwillingness to forgive themselves or to believe that God will forgive them, or sometimes by a strange reluctance in some of us to *really* forgive, to *really* forget, and to *really* rejoice.

"Plan of happiness"

The plan of the Lord and his promises are clear in the teachings of the scriptures. The heart of that plan, as I understand it, is announced in verses of scripture which were so movingly sung by the choir this morning:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him

should not perish, but have everlasting life.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." (John 3:16-17.)

Christ came to *save us*. His plan was called, by a prophet who understood it very well, a "plan of redemption," a "plan of mercy," a "plan of happiness" (Al. 42:13, 15-16). The Lord taught the letter-bound Pharisees the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son to impress the worth of all of God's children, to emphasize, as he said, the "joy [that] shall be in heaven over one sinner that *repenteth*." And to teach us the nature of a father who, when his son came to himself and started home, had compassion and ran to meet his boy. (Luke 15:3-32; italics added). In this and many others of his teachings, he manifested the intensity of his love and of his expectations of us in our treatment of each other and in our responsibility to him.

Reverently I remind you of the incident of the woman who, in the home of the Pharisee, Simon, washed the feet of the Lord with her tears and dried them with her hair, and anointed them with ointment (see Luke 7:37-39). The Savior taught the critical Simon the story of the creditor and the two debtors: "The one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

"And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?"

"Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged." (Luke 7:41-43.)

Then, speaking of the woman, he said: "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

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Second Day

"And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

"... Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." (Luke 7:47-48, 50.)

There is here, of course, no encouragement or condoning of sin. She had been converted by the Lord and sorely repented, and would obey his commandments and accept his forgiveness. And there would be rejoicing in heaven and should be on earth.

Alma

The story of Alma, the Book of Mormon prophet, was discussed yesterday and is well known. He taught these principles with courage and compassion perhaps never excelled. Himself the son of the great prophet, he and other youthful companions were guilty of serious sins. Through angelic intervention, they were turned to a better way; and Alma, repentant and restored, became a strong leader for the Lord. "Wickedness never was happiness"—he declared, and gratefully testified also of the "plan of mercy" that brings forgiveness to the truly penitent (Al. 42:10, 15). As the leader of his people he was uncompromising in defense of righteousness, and warm and compassionate with those who had repented and turned from unrighteousness. With his own children, including one son who had been guilty of serious moral error, he shared the anguish that follows transgression and the unspeakable joy that accompanies repentance and forgiveness:

"Yea, I say unto you, my son, that there could be nothing so exquisite and so bitter as were my pains. Yea, and again I say unto you, my son, that on the other hand, there can be nothing so exquisite and sweet as was my joy." (Al. 36:21.)

This man of great integrity and no pretense became the first chief judge of the people and high priest over the church. He who had cried

out unto the Lord Jesus Christ for mercy, "in the most bitter pain and anguish of soul; . . . did find peace to [his] soul" (Al. 38:8) and thereafter taught the people with such power and love that multitudes of them turned to the Lord, obeyed his commandments, received that "mercy [which] claimeth the penitent" (Al. 42:23).

Nephi

The message is consistent through scripture. The noble young prophet-leader Nephi wrote the sweet psalm of contrition and faith that is so encouraging and edifying and can be read in the fourth chapter of the second book of Nephi: "Notwithstanding the great goodness of the Lord, in showing me his great and marvelous works, my heart exclaimeth: O wretched man that I am! Yea, my heart sorroweth because of my flesh; my soul grieveth because of mine iniquities.

"I am encompassed about, because of the temptations and the sins which do so easily beset me.

"And when I desire to rejoice, my heart groaneth because of my sins; nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted." (2 Ne. 4:17-19.)

Nephi understood that true remorse is a gift from God, not a curse, but a blessing. True remorse involves sorrow and suffering; but the sorrow is purposeful, constructive, cleansing, the "godly sorrow" that "worketh repentance to salvation," and not the "sorrow of the world" (2 Cor. 7:10).

Through the prophet Ezekiel, the Lord taught us that he has no "pleasure at all" in the suffering of his children through sin. His joy comes when the sinner "turneth away from all his transgressions" for such an one shall "save his soul" (Ezek. 18:23, 27-28).

The Apostle Paul was disappointed with certain behavior on

the part of the Corinthian saints, and wrote them a letter chastising them. They repented; and when he learned of it, he wrote them again, saying that he was comforted in their comfort: "I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance" (2 Cor. 7:9).

Effects of true repentance

Alma summed it all up in magnificent instruction given his wayward son Corianton. He concluded that powerful lesson with these significant words—they could be saving words for some:

"And now, my son, I desire that ye should let these things trouble you no more, and only let your sins trouble you, with that trouble which shall bring you down unto repentance" (Al. 42:29).

Almighty God has promised to forgive, forget, and never mention the sins of which we have truly repented. But he has given us the gift of remorse to help us remember them constructively, thankfully, and humbly: "Do not endeavor to excuse yourself in the least point because of your sins, by denying the justice of God; but do you let the justice of God, and his mercy, and his long-suffering have full sway in your heart; and let it bring you down to the dust in humility" (Al. 42:30).

Corianton was sent to preach the word.

Souls are precious

As leaders, we deal with the most sacred and sensitive creation of God—his children.

We need to consider this as we carry out our duty to keep the Church free from iniquity.

"Holocausts," it has been written, "are caused not only by atomic explosion. A holocaust occurs whenever a person is put to shame." (Abraham Joshua Heschel.)

It is good to remember what Joseph Smith wrote a long time ago to the Saints scattered abroad:

"Let everyone labor to prepare himself for the vineyard, sparing a little time to comfort the mourners; to bind up the broken-hearted; to reclaim the backslider; to bring back the wanderer; to re-invite into the kingdom such as have been cut off, by encouraging them to lay to while the day lasts, and work righteousness, and, with one heart and one mind, prepare to help redeem Zion, that goodly land of promise, where the willing and obedient shall be blessed. Souls are as precious in the sight of God as they ever were; and the Elders were never called to drive any down to hell, but to persuade and invite all men everywhere to repent, that they may become the heirs of salvation. (*History of the Church*, 2:229.)

My child at first did not understand that my invitation was meant for her. She thought it was for someone else. "He didn't mean me." If any within the sound of my voice today need assurance that God's call to repentance and his invitation to mercy and forgiveness and love is for them, I bear you that solemn witness, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Marion D. Hanks, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just addressed us.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing, "O Say, What Is Truth?"

After the singing, Elder Robert D. Hales, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and President of the England London Mission, will speak to us.

The Choir and congregation sang the hymn, "O Say, What Is Truth?"

President Tanner

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder Robert D. Hales, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and

President of the England London Mission.

We shall then be pleased to hear from Elder Boyd K. Packer, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Robert D. Hales

I bring you greetings from the Saints and missionaries in the British Isles, especially those in the England London Mission where my dear companion, Mary, and I are currently serving.

What a joy it is to speak as a missionary and a special witness of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in my calling as a Seventy in this great restored church. Every missionary and every member of the Church has the right—yes, even the obligation—to bear testimony of Jesus Christ to his friends, family, and neighbors in mildness and in meekness.

“What think ye of Christ?”

Every person in the world at some point in his eternal progression is one day going to have to come to the moment of truth when he must answer the question, “What think ye of Christ?” (Matt. 22:42).

Think of that. At one point in our eternal progression, each one of us is going to have to answer the question, Who is Jesus Christ? We are told that every eye shall see, every ear shall hear, and every knee shall bow, every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (see Philip. 2:10-11); “When all men shall stand to be judged of him, then shall they confess that he is God” (Mosiah 27:31; see also Rom. 14:11 and D&C 76:110).

What think ye of Christ? Whom say ye that I am?

“While the Pharisees were gath-

ered together, Jesus asked them,

“Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David.”

Jesus answered them, “If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?”

“And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.” (Matt. 22:41-42, 45-46.)

On another occasion the people answered Jesus, saying, “Who is this Son of man? . . .

“But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him.” (John 12:34, 37.)

Still yet another time Jesus asked his disciples, saying, “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?” (Or stated another way, whom do men say that I the Son of God am?)

“And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

“He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

“And Simon Peter [the senior member of the Twelve Apostles] answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matt. 16:13-16.)

Jesus conversed on another occasion with a woman in Samaria:

“The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. . . .

“The woman saith unto him

[further], I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

"Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he." (John 4:19, 25-26.)

What think ye of Christ and whom say ye that he is? Many Christians profess to follow Jesus Christ but do not know him:

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

We can know Jesus Christ

Many profess to be Christians and yet do not believe that Jesus Christ is the literal Son of God, indeed, the eldest son of God the Father. Men are willing to follow some of his teachings but do not recognize the divine, eternal purpose and the significance of his life to all mankind. "What think ye of Christ?" and "Whom say ye that I am?" These were questions asked by Jesus to make men think, so that he might teach them who he was, that they might use their own free agency, come to their own conclusions and commitments, follow him, and gain a testimony that he is the Son of God, our Redeemer.

Using the sacred scriptures we can know Jesus Christ. He is more than a great teacher; he is the Messiah. He was willing to lay down his life for us; he is the only one who could, as these scriptures testify:

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

"I am the Lord thy God; and I give unto you this commandment—that no man shall come unto the Father but by me or by my word, which is my law, saith the Lord" (D&C 132:12).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the

way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

The mission and life of Jesus Christ

Who is he? From the scriptures we learn more about him: First, the Light of Christ is in all men. It leads men to accept the gospel and gain a testimony of Him. It is because of the Light of Christ that all men know good from evil—the guidance of a conscience. (See Moro. 7:12-19.)

Jesus Christ is a god; he is the Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Savior of the New Testament (see Abr. 2:7-8).

Jesus Christ dwelt in the heavens with his Father, and we dwelt with them as spirit children of God the Father (see John 1:1-5).

Jesus Christ presented his Father's eternal plan, that plan of which we are all part. We come to this earth to undergo testing for a probationary period and to have opposition in all things. Through the eternal principle of free agency, we are free to choose liberty and eternal life and return to God's presence if we live righteous lives; or to choose captivity and spiritual death. (See Moses 4:1-4.)

Jesus Christ is the creator of all things on earth, under the direction of his Father (see Moses 1:33; Eph. 3:9). "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 John 4:14).

Jesus Christ came to this earth, born of Mary, a mortal mother. His Father was Almighty God. (See Luke 1:26-35.)

Jesus Christ was baptized by immersion by John the Baptist, and the Holy Ghost was manifest in the "Spirit like a dove descending upon him." And his Father spoke: "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mark 1:10-11.)

Jesus Christ organized his church and selected twelve apostles,

and also prophets, sevensies, and evangelists (see Eph. 4:11; Luke 6:13, 10:1).

Jesus Christ's message is unique. He stands between us and his Father; he is the Mediator (see D&C 76:41-43; John 3:17). Through him shall all mankind be saved and by him shall all mankind be saved.

Jesus Christ is the Redeemer, our Savior; only he with a mortal mother and an immortal Father could fulfill the Atonement and die to save all mankind. He did so of his own free will and choice (see Matt. 26:39; Mark 14:34-36; Luke 22:41-42).

Jesus Christ was resurrected and appeared to many after his resurrection (see John 20:11-18, 24-30; Luke 24:13-44). He taught us the physical characteristics of a resurrected being and told us that we could follow his example and that we would be able to progress and be like him.

Jesus Christ's ascension into heaven before the eyes of his disciples was accompanied by the promise that in like manner he would come again (see Acts 1:9-11; Mark 16:19-20; Luke 24:51-53). The second coming of Jesus Christ is nigh at hand, as the signs of the Second Coming are being fulfilled this very day.

Christ's Church today

Jesus Christ appeared with his Father and restored the same organization he established during his ministry through Joseph Smith the Prophet in these latter days. In addition to the Bible, the Book of Mormon was revealed to the world as another witness to testify of his divine calling and ministry.

Jesus Christ leads and guides his church today through revelation to a prophet, President Spencer W. Kimball, and his counselors in the First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles, the same organization that he estab-

lished when he was here on earth (see D&C 102:9, 23; Articles of Faith 9).

Jesus Christ's admonition to "come . . . follow me" and "follow thou me" is the challenge that he gave to each of us (see Matt. 19:21; John 21:22). He lived in the pre-existence in the spirit world; he dwelt with God his Father. He is the Son, Jesus Christ. We took a mortal body upon us. We'll have opposition; we will taste death and be resurrected because of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. He will be granted a degree of glory. We can have that same degree of glory—the celestial kingdom; if we are worthy. We can dwell once again with God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ throughout all the eternities.

There are many who will hear this message for the first time today. Ponder it carefully. Contact a member or a missionary of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. If you have heard the message before and the Spirit bears witness of its truthfulness and touches your heart, come back to activity and fellowship in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. If you are a young man or young woman or retired couple and the Spirit bears witness to you that you should go on a mission to declare this message to the world, make your commitment today. My mother and father went on a mission after retirement and are now the example for two sons, a daughter, eleven grandsons, and four great-grandchildren.

During this Easter season, this is my personal witness and testimony. Oh, if I had the voice and trumpet of an angel that I could say to all mankind that He is risen and that he lives; that he is the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father, the promised Messiah, our Redeemer and Savior; that he came into this world to teach the gospel by example. His

divine mission is directed to you and me to come unto him and he will lead us into life eternal. Salvation is by and through his name (Acts 4:12; D&C 132:12; John 14:6), and this I say in the holy name of our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Robert D. Hales, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and President of the England London mission, has just spoken to us.

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder Boyd K. Packer, of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Boyd K. Packer

Test of faith

I speak to that member of the Church who struggles with a test of faith that could touch any one of us.

If I can take the arm of that one, and steady him when his faith is tottering, I do not hesitate to impose upon the rest of you for just a few minutes.

At times someone has come to me, their faith shaken by alleged wrongdoing of some leader in the Church.

For instance, one young man was being constantly ridiculed by his co-workers for his activity in the Church. They claimed to know of a bishop who had cheated someone in business, or a stake president who had misrepresented something on a contract, or a mission president who had borrowed money, giving false information.

Or, they told of a bishop who had discriminated against one member, refusing to give a temple recommend, but had shown favoritism by signing a recommend for another whose unworthiness was widely known.

Such incidents as these, which supposedly involve Church leaders, are described as evidence that the gospel is not true, that the Church is not divinely inspired, or that it is being misled.

He had no satisfactory answer to their charges. He felt defenseless and foolish and was being drawn to join

them in their criticism of the Church.

Did he believe all of these stories? Well, he could not be sure. There must be something to some of them.

Questions to consider

If you also face such a test of faith, consider the questions he was asked:

Have you ever, in your life, attended any Church meeting—priesthood meeting, sacrament meeting, Relief Society, Sunday School, a conference or fireside, a seminary class, a temple session, or any meeting sponsored by the Church—where any encouragement or authorization was given to be dishonest, to cheat in business, or take advantage of anyone?

He answered that he had not.

The next question:

Have you read, or do you know of anything in the literature of the Church, in the scriptures themselves, in lesson manuals, in Church magazines or books, in Church publications of any kind, which contains any consent to lie, or to steal, to misrepresent, to defraud, to be immoral or vulgar, to profane, to be brutal, or to abuse any living soul?

Again he said, after thoughtful consideration, that he had not.

Have you ever been encouraged in a training session, a leadership meeting, or an interview to transgress or misbehave in any way? Have you

ever been encouraged to be extreme or unreasonable or intemperate?

He had not.

You are inside the Church where you can see at close hand the conduct of bishops or Relief Society presidents, of high councilors, stake presidents, or General Authorities. Could such conduct be described as being typical of them?

He thought it could not.

You are active and have held positions in the Church. Surely, you would have noticed if the Church promoted any of these things in any way.

Yes, he thought he would have noticed.

Why then, I asked him, when you hear reports of this kind, should you feel that the Church is to blame?

There is no provision in the teachings or doctrines of the Church for any member to be dishonest, or immoral, or irresponsible, or even careless.

Have you not been taught all of your life, that if a member of the Church, particularly one in high position, is unworthy in any way, he acts against the standards of the Church? He is not in harmony with the teachings, the doctrines, or with the leadership of the Church.

Why, then, should your faith be shaken by this account, or that, of some alleged misconduct—most of them misrepresented or untrue?

There are those who assume if someone is depressed—the Church must have caused it. If there is a divorce—somehow the Church is to blame. And on and on.

When something is published about someone in major difficulty, if he is a member of the Church, that fact is generally included as essential information.

But have you ever read of a robbery, a theft, an embezzlement, a murder or suicide, that listed the guilty party as a Baptist, or a Meth-

odist, or a Catholic? I think you have not.

Why, then, do they find it worth the mention when the unfortunate person is a Mormon?

Really, that is something of a backhanded compliment. It is an acknowledgment that members of the Church are supposed to know better, and we're supposed to do better; and when we don't, they point at the Church.

Be careful of those who promote controversy and contention, "for verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me," saith the Lord (3 Ne. 11:29).

This next question concerns those who are shaking your faith.

Are they really being fair? Could it be that they point to alleged misconduct, insinuating that the Church is responsible, to excuse themselves from living the high standards of the Church or to cover some failure to do so? You think about that—carefully.

Now, does anyone holding a responsible position in the Church ever act unworthily?

The answer: of course, it happens. It is an exception, but it happens.

When we call a man to be a stake president or a bishop, for instance, we say, in effect:

"Here is a congregation. You are to preside over them. They are under constant temptation, and you are to see that they win that battle. Govern them in such a way that they can succeed. Devote yourself unselfishly to this cause.

"And, incidentally, while you preside, you are not excused from your own trials and temptations. They will, in fact, be increased because you are a leader. Win your own battle as best you can."

If a leader does conduct himself unworthily, his actions fly against

everything the Church stands for, and he is subject to release.

It has even been our sad responsibility, on some few occasions, to excommunicate leaders from the Church who have been guilty of very serious illegal or immoral conduct.

That should increase, not shake, your faith in the Church, or of a nonmember toward it.

When I was a student, nothing tried my faith more than the falling away of the Three Witnesses. If ever there was a temptation, for the sake of appearances, for the Church to compromise Church principles, that was the time. It was not done; and therefore, what had shaken my faith, one day was transformed into an anchor to hold it steady.

"Judge not . . ."

When you hear stories, be wise. Unless you are in all the interviews, and hear all the evidence, you are not in a position to really know. Be careful, lest you jump to a confusion.

Unless you are a participant and have full knowledge, better:

"Judge not, that ye be not judged.

"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." (Matt. 7:1-2.)

Years ago I learned a lesson about judging.

I was a city councilman in Brigham City and was also on the stake high council. Late one night I was returning home from a high council meeting, pondering on what had happened there.

There was a red light and a siren. I was given a ticket for going forty-five miles an hour in a thirty-mile-an-hour zone. I accepted the ticket without protest, for I had not been paying attention.

The city judge was always in his office very early, and I went to get the matter settled before going to

teach seminary the next day.

The judge had recently made a request for some new furniture. It rested with me, as a councilman, to approve it and sign the voucher.

He looked at my ticket and smiled, saying, "There have, on occasions, been exceptions made."

I told him that in view of my position he was obliged to treat me like any other citizen. Reluctantly he consented.

"The going rate is a dollar a mile. That will be fifteen dollars."

I paid the fine.

Two nights later Councilman Bundy reported, in a meeting of the city council, that he had fired a policeman. When the mayor asked the cause, he was told, and I quote: "Well, he was always arresting the wrong people."

Later Councilman Bundy explained that there had been vandalism in the city. Late at night someone had gone down Forest Street in a recreation vehicle and snapped off all the young trees. There had been damage in the cemetery also.

Where were the police? He found they were hiding behind signboards waiting for some unwary motorist.

Councilman Bundy had tried over a period of weeks to get them to patrol the city at night. One young officer just did not seem to learn, and so he had been dismissed.

Here then, was a man who gave a traffic ticket to a city councilman. Two days later he was dismissed. And the cause, stated in a city council meeting, with several delegations as witness: "He was always arresting the wrong people."

Do you think he could be convinced that I did not cause him to be fired?

Had I known of it, I may have delayed or prevented his dismissal, just for appearances.

Appearances, however, con-

victed me of unworthy use of influence.

Another example: Years ago in one of our Church schools, a teacher was summarily dismissed. The general explanation given did not satisfy his colleagues.

A delegation went to the office of the principal and demanded that he be reinstated. The principal refused. He offered no further explanation.

The delegation concluded, therefore, that the principal had acted for "political reasons," for he was known to have some deep philosophical differences with that teacher.

The teacher (and this is frequently the case) took the part of a mistreated soul. His actions encouraged his colleagues in their protest.

The truth, known to the members of the Church Board of Education, was that the teacher had been dismissed for some very serious misconduct. Should all be made public, it would be doubtful that he could be reemployed as a teacher.

The principal, however, had some faith. If things were not noised about, the teacher might, through repentance and restitution, make himself again worthy to teach—perhaps even in the Church school system.

This principal generously took much criticism, even abuse, over a long period of time. He felt that the good of a family and the rehabilitation of a teacher was more important than his own professional reputation for the moment.

I was inspired by his example. It has been repeated a thousand times or more in the wards and stakes of the Church.

Often actions of bishops and stake presidents and others are misread by people who are not in a position to know the full truth.

Neither the bishop nor the member he is judging is obliged to con-

fide in us. The bishop must keep confidences.

When all is said and done, in most cases, it is clearly none of our business anyway.

Often someone will not go to his bishop with a problem. He wants to see a General Authority instead. He says the bishop will talk—for what about the time when someone in the ward went to him and soon everyone knew about the problem?

Follow these cases through, as I have done, and you will probably find that, first, the member confided in her neighbor who didn't know what to counsel her. Then she talked it over with her best friend, and then her sister, and received conflicting advice. Finally, her husband was told by the man he rides with that they'd better see the bishop.

Indeed, it was noised about, but not by the bishop. Bishops keep confidences.

John, the Apostle, counseled:

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).

Keep your faith

Now then, stand steady, Keep your faith. I bear witness that the gospel of Jesus Christ is true. God lives and directs this work. The Church is on the right course. It is on schedule. And I bear witness that it is righteously led by a prophet of God.

Things that now are stumbling blocks may, one day soon, be stepping-stones for you.

But do not expect to see the day when this Church, or those in it, will be free from resistance, criticism, even persecution. That will never be.

Just remember:

"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." (Matt. 5:11-12.)

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Boyd K. Packer, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us.

Before hearing President Kimball's concluding remarks, we should like to express, on behalf of all who have listened to the singing during sessions of this General Conference, appreciation and our sincere gratitude to the members of the Tabernacle Choir, for again giving so generously of their time, to bring us the beautiful and inspiring music heard at this Conference. We are appreciative of the lovely music performed by the Brigham Young University combined chorus at the Saturday afternoon session, and by the combined Tabernacle Choir and Mormon Youth Men's Chorus that sang at the priesthood session last night. We are thankful to their conductors and organists.

We thank all who have contributed in various ways to the success and inspiration of this Conference, especially the General Authorities, who have given such appropriate, and inspiring messages, and such beautiful prayers.

We appreciate the attention given by local, and national, press representa-

tives, and by representatives of radio, and television, in reporting the sessions of this Conference.

We thank our city officials and others for the cooperation given this Conference; the city traffic officers for courteously and efficiently handling the increased traffic; the fire department and the Relief Society and Church health unit nurses, who have been on hand to render service throughout the Conference.

We are grateful to the Tabernacle ushers for seating the great audiences of these Conference sessions in such a courteous manner.

We again express appreciation to the owners, and managers, of the many radio, and television, stations who have given public service time to carry sessions of the conference in the United States, Mexico, Central America, and Canada; by satellite to Australia and South America; and by shortwave to Europe, Africa, and Latin America.

We thank the interpreters who have provided translation for the sessions of the Conference.

Our beloved prophet, President Spencer W. Kimball, will be our concluding speaker of the Conference, after which the Tabernacle Choir will sing, "I Need Thee Every Hour."

The benediction will then be offered by Elder Gene R. Cook, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and supervisor of the Andes Area.

This Conference will then stand adjourned for six months.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Beloved brethren and sisters, this has been a glorious conference. We are grateful to all who have taken part in any way. My heart has rejoiced, and my thoughts have been inspired to turn to many things, as what has been said and sung has deeply touched me.

Ready to move forward

Now, my brothers and sisters, it seems clear to me, indeed, this impression weighs upon me—that the Church is at a point in its growth and maturity when we are at last ready to move forward in a major way. Some decisions have been made and others pending, which will clear the way, organizationally. But the basic decisions needed for us to move forward, as a people, must be made by the individual members of the Church. The major strides which must be made by the Church will follow upon the major strides to be made by us as individuals.

We have paused on some plateaus long enough. Let us resume our journey forward and upward. Let us quietly put an end to our reluctance to reach out to others—whether in our own families, wards, or neighborhoods. We have been diverted, at times, from fundamentals on which we must now focus in order to move forward as a person or as a people.

Efforts of each member

Seemingly small efforts in the life of each member could do so much to move the Church forward as never before. Think, brothers and sisters, what would happen if each active family were to bring another family or individual into the Church before next April conference: We would be joined by several hundred thousand new members of the

Church. Imagine, if only one additional mature couple were to be called on a full-time mission from each ward—our missionary force would go from 27,500 to over 40,000! Contemplate the results if each family were to assist—between now and next April conference—an inactive family or individual into full activity. How we would revel in the association of those tens of thousands!

Think of the blessings here and on the other side of the veil if each holder of a temple recommend were to do just one more endowment this next year! And how would our non-member neighbors and friends feel if we were each to do just one more quiet act of Christian service for them before October conference—regardless of whether or not they are interested in the Church!

Imagine how much richer our family life would be if our spouses and children were to receive a few more minutes of individual attention each month!

Upsurge in spirituality

Are we ready, brothers and sisters, to do these seemingly small things out of which great blessings will proceed? I think we are. I believe the Lord's church is on the verge of an upsurge in spirituality. Our individual spiritual growth is the key to major numerical growth in the kingdom. The Church is ready to accomplish these things now which it could not have done just a few years ago. So also we are ready as members. If you will accept my counsel, you will come to feel that there is a readiness in our people which must be put to work.

Let us not shrink from the next steps in our spiritual growth, brothers

and sisters, by holding back, or side-stepping our fresh opportunities for service to our families and our fellowmen.

Let us trust the Lord and take the next steps in our individual lives. He has promised us that he will be our tender tutor, measuring what we are ready for:

"And ye cannot bear all things now; nevertheless, be of good cheer, for I will lead you along" (D&C 78:18).

He will not ask us to bear more than we can bear nor thrust upon us that for which we are not yet ready. But likewise, we must not tarry too long when we are ready to move on.

Causes for holding back

It seems to me that basically there are two major causes for the holding back which we see in the Church: First, sin which results in disinterest or immobilization and guilt; and second, the reluctance of good members of the Church to stretch just a little bit more in the service, instead of being too slow to see the power of their example or too shy about letting their light shine. It is time for us all to take those seemingly small steps forward which will, when compounded, mean major progress for the Church!

The monumental challenge we face is to provide trained leadership for our fast-growing membership and to help that membership to keep clean from the world in which we must live.

The encroachment of the world into our lives is threatening. How hard it seems to many people to live *in* the world but not *of* the world.

Our constant prayer and our major efforts are to see that the members are sanctified through their righteousness. We urge our people to "stand in holy places" (D&C 87:8).

There may be some who have a general feeling of uneasiness because of world conditions and the lengthening shadows of evil. But the Lord said: "If ye are prepared ye shall not fear" (D&C 38:30).

The gospel in the home

The gospel gives purpose to our lives. It is the way to happiness. Our success, individually and as a church, will largely be determined by how faithfully we focus on living the gospel in the home.

Only as we see clearly the responsibilities of each individual and the role of families and the home can we properly understand that the priesthood quorums and the auxiliary organizations, even wards and stakes, exist primarily to help members live the gospel in the home. However, church programs should always support and never detract from gospel-centered family activities.

Members should achieve personal and family preparedness, assisting and strengthening their own family members and others temporally and spiritually in the Lord's way.

All should work together to make home a place where we love to be, a place of listening and learning, a place where each member can find mutual love, support, appreciation, and encouragement.

Let us "be of good cheer" (D&C 78:18), for the Lord will, as he has promised, lead us along and show us the way. He will help us as we decide from day to day on the allocation of our time and talent. We will move faster if we hurry less. We will make more real progress if we focus on the fundamentals. We will even come to know more as we serve more, for as we learn to *hear* more we are made ready to *hear* more (see John 16:12 and Mark 4:33).

The Lord has helped to make us

ready for major progress. Let us now go to and make the world ready for his coming!

Brothers and sisters, I've been so very much impressed with the sermons of the Brethren as they have poured out their souls to us in teaching us the principles of the gospel. They have been well defined and well explained.

Response to Jesus' question

I want to bring to your attention one or two of the scriptures that have been mentioned in the services already. For instance, this one:

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"

"And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

"He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?"

"And Simon Peter answered [for the others] and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. 16:13-16.)

That is our message. That is what we are attempting to take to the world, to see that every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, and every individual under heaven hears that message in a real, important way.

Now, continuing the quotation: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven [has revealed it to thee].

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16:17, 19.)

And that explains to us the importance of our role as we go out into the world. We teach them the truths, teach them how to follow the

truths, and promise them these blessings which we have the authority from heaven to give to them.

Peter's testimony

I want to quote a few lines from Peter as he neared his demise:

"Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

"Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

"For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

"And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." (2 Pet. 1:14-20.)

And now another, more modern scripture I should like to add:

"And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!"—and this you have heard many times during this conference from various serious-minded Brethren with a strong testimony.

"For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

"That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God." (D&C 76:22-24.)

One more scripture: "But now mine own eyes have beheld God; but not my natural, but my spiritual eyes, for my natural eyes could not have beheld; for I should have withered and died in his presence; but his glory was upon me; and I beheld his face, for I was transfigured before him" (Moses 1:11).

"Feed my sheep"

And then one other:

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

"He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

"He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep." (John 21:15-17.)

Now the Lord has said that to every man, woman, and child in this congregation and in this world who has joined his church: "Lovest thou me?" Then show me! Show me: feed my sheep. We have in many of the lands of this world large, fast-growing, delightful, wonderful congregations; and we say to you again that the Lord is saying, "Feed my sheep." And he knows whether we are or not. He knows all the time. We don't need to put it into words; we don't need to express that for

ourselves. All we need to do is to feed his sheep.

Gospel teaching by adults

I might mention one more thing that Brother Haight mentioned—teaching the gospel by the adults. I think it is a matter that we have overlooked. We have rather forgotten, we older people, who have been retired and who have found an easy place to go with our camping outfit and with our other opportunities. We have found an easy way to satisfy our own thoughts and our own consciences that the work must go on—we will send our boys, we say.

I like the thought very much that Elder Haight mentioned: All of us have this responsibility. Not all of us are able, but many, many of us are. Hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saints are able to preach the gospel in a careful, splendid way as the gospel is given to them.

The Lord has promised us that he would give us all the help and the strength and the inspiration that we need, and so all he says is, "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs." And there are thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of little sheep, little lambs that need feeding in all these countries in the world.

So we ask you again to do the things that we have suggested, brothers and sisters, such as keeping up your homes and writing in your journals. Every person should keep a journal and every person *can* keep a journal. It should be an enlightening one and should bring great blessings and happiness to the families. If there is anyone here who isn't doing so, will you repent today and change—change your life?

Now I should close. I wish to say to you, my brothers and sisters, we love you devotedly, we love you all, we appreciate all you do, and we just hope you will do more.

Saturday, March 31

First Day

We ask our Heavenly Father to give you power to extend your blessings to the people in your neighborhood who need them and to take the gospel to areas in the world that need those blessings now. We ask our Heavenly Father to be with you between now and our next conference and from then on. And we say again, Jesus is our light; he is our stay; he is our Savior and he lives; and we

bear this testimony in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang the hymn, "I need Thee Every Hour."

The benediction was offered by Elder Gene R. Cook.

GENERAL WELFARE SESSION

A General Welfare Services session was held in connection with General Conference on Saturday morning, March 31, 1979, at 7 o'clock. Invited to attend this meeting were General Authorities, regional representatives, stake presidencies, high councilors involved in welfare work, bishoprics, and stake and ward Relief Society presidencies, together with others responsible for operating welfare production projects.

President Spencer W. Kimball presided at this session, and President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency, conducted it.

President Tanner opened the meeting with the following remarks:

President N. Eldon Tanner:

President Spencer W. Kimball, who presides at this Conference, has asked me to conduct this session.

We are happy to welcome you to

this General Welfare Services meeting, attended by general, and local, priesthood leaders, and sisters of the Relief Society. The matters to be presented at this meeting are of vital importance to the effectiveness of the welfare program. We, therefore, request that you instruct those under your direction in the things you will be taught here.

Under the direction of Brother Donald Ripplinger, with Brother Roy M. Darley at the organ, we shall begin this meeting by singing hymn No. 118, "Now Let Us Rejoice."

The invocation will be offered by Elder Robert L. Backman, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The congregation sang the hymn, "Now Let Us Rejoice."

Elder Robert L. Backman offered the invocation.

President N. Eldon Tanner

President Kimball has asked me to introduce to you an expansion of the procedure for conducting Church affairs at the area and region levels. With the increased growth and internationalization of the Church and the great responsibility to promote the ecclesiastical and temporal work throughout the world in a more unified fashion, we are introducing an emphasis on the role of councils in Church government.

This action will maintain the orderly management of Church activity at all administrative levels. President Ezra Taft Benson, of the Council of the Twelve, and Bishop Victor L. Brown, Presiding Bishop of the Church, will explain details and indicate how this modification is to be implemented in the various parts of the Church.

Priesthood councils

Since its beginning, the Church has been governed by leadership councils. Priesthood councils are a fundamental order of the Church, as illustrated repeatedly in the Doctrine and Covenants.

Sometimes these councils are advisory in nature, such as with the ward council, where auxiliary leaders advise the bishop and Melchizedek Priesthood leaders in the affairs of the ward.

Sometimes these councils are regulatory bodies, such as with the General Church Coordinating Council which was announced by the First Presidency in 1977. This council consists of the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve, and the Presiding Bishopric. In this council, policies and procedures are agreed upon, and the work of the Church is coordinated and correlated.

The Church Coordinating Council, after due deliberation, has approved the establishment of councils

at area and region levels throughout the Church and multiregion councils where necessary.

These councils will make it possible to integrate better all the affairs of the Church. Region and area leaders will be able to plan, coordinate, and regulate *all* the affairs of the Church at these levels in a forum that will provide for full expression of needs, concerns, and opportunities.

These councils will also provide a better means for implementing in the field the service functions of the temporal line established under the Presiding Bishopric.

The leadership of a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy in area councils and of a Regional Representative in region councils will ensure coordinated and regulated activities at each level of Church administration. These councils, properly organized and functioning, assure a unified approach to move forward the ecclesiastical and temporal work of the Church for the blessing of individuals and families.

Increase efficiency, spirituality

We are confident that this expansion of priesthood councils will not only increase efficiency and harmony, but raise the spirituality of the Church. As Paul beautifully states in Ephesians, chapter 4, the Church organization is given "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:12-13).

Now may I give emphasis to two subsequent verses of Paul's letter which we do not always quote, but which have particular meaning in

light of these newly announced priesthood councils:

"But speaking the truth in love, may [we] grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

"From whom the whole body *fityly joined together* and compacted by that which *every joint supplieth*, according to the *effectual working* in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:15-16; italics added).

Please note now, brothers and sisters, the whole body is compacted by that which every *joint* or *council* supplies. With this action today, we are completing the *linkage* of the

priesthood chain both ecclesiastically and temporally. We know that you leaders will give strength to and will benefit from participation in priesthood councils at your several levels.

May the Lord richly bless you in carrying forth this great work of establishing Zion and preparing us for the Lord's eventual rule on earth. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Tanner

President Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will now address us.

He will be followed by Bishop Victor L. Brown, Presiding Bishop of the Church.

President Ezra Taft Benson

My beloved brethren and sisters, as President Tanner has announced, we are pleased to announce today some developments affecting area and local Church administration. May I say at the outset that what you will see and hear is the result of months of prayerful study and deliberation. This presentation about Church councils is *not* a new program, but it is a reemphasis of a principle based on the scriptures and on traditional Church government procedures. Some of you who live in the United States will recognize in this presentation nothing more than what is already being done at your interim meetings.

Because this is such an important matter, I will stay with a written text, using visuals as needed. As I begin, however, I want you to know that this presentation has the wholehearted endorsement of the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, the First Quorum of the Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric. We have no doubt that what we are presenting to you today will greatly

facilitate communication and unity at various Church levels and help move the kingdom forward.

Church government through councils

Some background may be helpful so you can more completely understand the significance of these developments.

Throughout the history of the Church, it has been a practice that essentially ecclesiastical matters be administered by the Quorum of the Twelve and that essentially temporal affairs be administered by the Presiding Bishopric. This practice continues to this day.

You are all, of course, familiar with the traditional administrative channel of authority to the field from the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, Area Supervisors, Regional Representatives, stake presidents, and bishops. This channel of authority remains unchanged.

More recently, because of the need to carefully manage temporal matters in the field, approval was given to have a Presiding Bishopric area supervisor in certain countries of the world. He has worked in close cooperation with the General Authority Area Supervisor and has reported his responsibilities on temporal matters to the Presiding Bishopric, who in turn report to the First Presidency.

The principle we desire to reemphasize was well expressed by President Stephen L. Richards, first counselor to President David O. McKay, in these words:

"As I conceive it, the genius of our Church government is government through *councils*. The Council of the Presidency, the Council of the Twelve, the Council of the Stake Presidency . . . the Council of the Bishopric. . . . I have had enough experience to know the value of councils. . . . I see the wisdom, God's wisdom, in creating councils: to govern his Kingdom. In the spirit under which we labor, men can get together with seemingly divergent views and far different backgrounds, and under the operation of that spirit, by counseling together, they can arrive at an accord." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1953, p. 86.)

The First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, and the Presiding Bishopric have determined to organize council meetings at the general Church level, the area level, and the region level. These councils will be called the Church Coordinating Council (at the general level), area council, multiregion council (*only* if needed), region council, and the presently existing stake and ward correlation councils.

We have felt that in order to be effective, these councils need to be *comprehensive* in representing *all* Church programs so that there will be a *correlating, coordinating, planning, and resolving* body at each of these levels. These councils, properly

organized and functioning, assure a unified approach to the management of ecclesiastical and temporal affairs.

It has also been determined that the General Authority Area Supervisor's title will be changed to *executive administrator*, and outside of the United States and Canada, the Presiding Bishopric area supervisor's title will be changed to *director for temporal affairs*. These title changes take effect immediately. In the United States and Canada the Presiding Bishopric will appoint individuals either from Church headquarters or from the local area to represent and manage temporal activities.

Now may I say a word to all who will participate in the administration of these councils at the area, region, and other local levels. The Twelve continue to be vitally interested in temporal matters; the Presiding Bishopric continue to be vitally concerned with ecclesiastical matters. To us it is one great program. This division of responsibility is intended for administrative convenience. All things are spiritual to the Lord (see D&C 29:34).

I'll now speak briefly about each of these councils at the respective levels.

First: The Church Coordinating Council

This council is comprised of the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, and the Presiding Bishopric.

The Presidents of the First Quorum of the Seventy will be invited to attend the meetings of this council and will also be invited to the General Welfare Services Committee.

The Church Coordinating Council will set policy, authorize exceptions to policy, authorize implementation, and resolve any difficulties which remain unresolved at the area council level.

Communications between the Church Coordinating Council and

area administrations will proceed through the ecclesiastical and temporal lines.

The Church Coordinating Council will also set priorities (insofar as they desire to do so), so that area and region councils can function within guidelines. This will help us meet the urgent need to balance the distribution of available resources (both time and money) which are to be given to various Church programs and efforts. For example, suppose recommendations from the combined area councils of the Church show a need for 800 buildings during a given year, but the Church has only time and money resources for 600 buildings. The Church Coordinating Council would then determine where resources are needed most.

This council will also review and approve overall plans for ecclesiastical and temporal matters before policies are implemented.

Second: The Area Council

The primary council in the field for correlating, coordinating, planning, and resolving problems is the *area council*. This council will function under the direction of the executive administrator. The area council will consider items of local concern and will transmit headquarters-approved programs and activities to all regional and stake officers. The area council should meet at least quarterly.

Regional Representatives will attend the area council meetings and will work closely with the executive administrator. Regional Representatives will be line officers to the stake president, with certain exceptions which have been noted to them. In this system of councils, the Regional Representative is best viewed as an administrator. He now becomes accountable for administering Church affairs at the region level.

The area council will develop the strategic plan for the area—broad guidelines outlining major activities and objectives. Personnel on the temporal side will do the detailed planning work for temporal affairs. Regional Representatives, mission presidents (when invited), and stake presidents (when invited) will do detailed planning for ecclesiastical affairs. Both the executive administrator and appointed personnel for temporal affairs will present these overall plans to the area council for review and approval before such plans are implemented.

Let us look at the implementation of the area council internationally and then within the United States and Canada.

A. Area councils outside United States and Canada. Membership in the area council outside the United States and Canada will include: the executive administrator, the director for temporal affairs, and all Regional Representatives in the area.

Others invited to attend when items relating to their responsibilities are discussed will be the Welfare Services area manager, the Physical Facilities area manager, the Finance area manager, the Materials Management area manager, the Information Systems area manager, the Church Educational System area director, and a Church-service Public Communications area director. Mission presidents could be invited by the executive administrator, if needed.

The responsibilities of the executive administrator throughout the world will be—

1. To preside over and provide ecclesiastical leadership in the area.
2. To preside in all area council meetings.
3. To set priorities.
4. To control planning.
5. To regulate within policy.
6. To train.

The director for temporal affairs will have the responsibility to—

1. Manage operations to service ecclesiastical needs.
2. Assist in planning.
3. Provide technical services.
4. Assist in training.

While both the executive administrator (General Authority) and the director for temporal affairs (representing the Presiding Bishopric) have independent stewardships, they are to accomplish common ends. To coordinate all area affairs, an *executive committee* of the council is authorized outside the United States and Canada, composed of the executive administrator and the director for temporal affairs. They would *mutually* determine the council agenda, plan guidelines, and determine which temporal functions need to be represented at each quarterly council meeting. They will be assisted by a secretary. Through this cooperative effort their separate reporting relationships are respected, but common purposes are achieved. The executive committee will ordinarily meet weekly or as often as circumstances require.

Now a look at the area council in the United States and Canada.

B. Area councils within United States and Canada. Members of the area council will be the executive administrator and all Regional Representatives in the area. Mission presidents could be invited by the executive administrator if needed.

Others who may be invited to attend when items relating to their responsibilities are discussed are: the Welfare Services area director, a Church-service Public Communications area director, the Church Educational System area director, and others as necessary. Welfare services matters will not be discussed without the presence and participation of the Welfare Services area director.

The implementation of the area council within the United States and Canada will vary from the area council outside the United States and Canada since there are no directors for temporal affairs in the United States or in Canada. Consequently, headquarters departments, in consultation with the executive administrator, will assign designated individuals for the functions of Welfare Services and Physical Facilities. These individuals will work closely with the executive administrator and will attend the area council as needed. The Presiding Bishopric will assign personnel for temporal matters or approve invitations for headquarters staff to attend periodic area council meetings. These individuals assigned by the Presiding Bishopric will have the responsibility to—

1. Manage operations to service ecclesiastical needs.
2. Assist in planning.
3. Provide technical services.
4. Assist in training.

Third: The Multiregion and Region Councils

Welfare services activities require councils at the multiregion level. Let us now look at the multiregion council.

A. The multiregion council. Multiregion councils are authorized for welfare services activities. The executive administrator presides at these councils and procedures will parallel those of the area council. Membership on a multiregion council consists of the executive administrator, the Welfare Services area director (as he deems necessary), the Regional Representatives of the regions involved, and the multiregion Welfare Services director. A stake bishops' council chairman and a stake Relief Society president from one of the region councils, designated by the executive administrator,

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serve as members when welfare services matters are discussed. Multi-region councils meet on an "as needed" basis.

We shall now look at the composition of a region council.

B. The region council. Membership on a region council consists of the Regional Representative and stake presidents.

Others invited to attend, when items relating to their responsibilities are discussed, are the Welfare Services region agent, the Public Communications region directors, the Church Educational System region coordinator, and other representatives of ecclesiastical and temporal programs as necessary. A stake bishops' council chairman and a stake Relief Society president, designated by the Regional Representative, should attend when welfare services matters are discussed. Mission presidents could be invited with the approval of the executive administrator.

The region council will handle administration and correlation matters of a multiple-stake nature as well as communicate and implement all actions of the general Church, area, or multiregion council. Region council meetings will be held at least quarterly. For simplification and to avoid unnecessary travel, interim meetings may continue and could well become a meeting of the region council.

The Regional Representative performs duties paralleling those of the executive administrator in the area council.

In order to facilitate the work of the region council, it will be necessary to have a Church-service Welfare Services region agent who represents welfare services operations at the region level.

Fourth: Stake Councils

The composition of the stake correlation council and the stake wel-

fare services committee remains the same.

Fifth: Ward Councils

The same emphasis on Church councils applies at the ward level. Membership on the ward correlation council and the ward welfare services committee is not changed.

Again, the complete overview of the system of councils at the various levels will appear as illustrated.

Last: Family Councils

I mention family councils because of our persistent emphasis on family unity and family solidarity. By encouraging parents to hold family councils, we imitate in our homes a heavenly pattern.

Now a word to you, my brethren, the stake presidents.

This is a time of transition. Many of the duties affecting such activities as welfare services and public communications previously handled by stake presidents will now be handled by Regional Representatives. We do not want to have ongoing operations interrupted during this time of transition. Stake presidents and others presently responsible should go on doing what they are now doing in their region, multiregion or area assignments until they are officially released by the executive administrator. During the transition it may be necessary for executive administrators to meet with representatives of the Church Educational System, Public Communications, and especially the Welfare Services Department so that all aspects of the work (including the calling and releasing of Church-service personnel) may be carefully considered.

Now a concluding word.

There is a principle cited in the Doctrine and Covenants which, though directed specifically to the

leading quorums of the Church, applies to all councils in Church government. I quote from section 107:

"And every decision made by either of these quorums [and for our purposes we could substitute the word *council*] must be by the unanimous voice of the same; that is, every member in each quorum [council] must be agreed to its decisions. . . .

"The decisions of these quorums [or councils] . . . are to be made in all righteousness, in holiness, and lowliness of heart, meekness and long suffering, and in faith, and virtue, and knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity;

"Because the promise is, if these things abound in them they shall not be unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord." (D&C 107:27, 30, 31.)

This seems to me to be the pattern by which the Lord would have

us operate through priesthood councils at all levels of Church government. We must be one in all aspects of this work—ecclesiastically and temporally—for all things are spiritual to Him whom we acknowledge as Master. You can see that this is a great step toward achieving greater unity in managing the affairs of the Church. We, as priesthood holders, need to act in the manner which the Lord instructs in the revelation just quoted.

Brethren and sisters, we want you to know that our whole interest has been to do what is best for the kingdom. Today we are taking a step which *is* for the good of the kingdom. May the Lord bless us in our efforts as we implement this system of priesthood councils so that we, under the operation of the Spirit, may have greater unity, accord, and effectiveness in building the Lord's kingdom, which I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Bishop Victor L. Brown

My dear brothers and sisters, hope you have been able to grasp at least a small part of the significance associated with President Benson's presentation. It is a most significant step forward in Church government—one which will aid the priesthood to prepare for even greater Church growth than ever before. It will introduce a more effective level of planning and decision making than ever before. I stand in awe as I witness the hand of the Lord direct his servants in this, his kingdom. The introduction of councils at the region, multiregion, and area levels is a most important move. The Presiding Bishopric expresses its enthusiastic, wholehearted support of all that has been said.

As you are aware, the Presiding Bishopric, under the direction of the

First Presidency, has the responsibility for administering many of the temporal affairs of the Church. These include physical facilities, finance, welfare services, materials management, and information systems.

We administer this network of temporal functions to support and service priesthood needs and Church activities throughout the world. They are managed in the United States and Canada through our headquarters department managing directors and their management teams. A limited number of these departments are decentralized, such as Operations and Maintenance. Outside the United States and Canada these functions are all decentralized and are managed in each area of the world by directors for temporal affairs. Each area office

is responsible for all the activities listed above.

I would like to add further dimension to the four major accountabilities our personnel have in performing their service functions. Since some of these responsibilities, particularly in Welfare Services, have been carried out to this point by stake presidents, local committees and others, I hope you will take special note of them.

Manage operations to serve ecclesiastical needs

First, we are to manage operations to service ecclesiastical needs. This means that temporal personnel will manage the acquisition of land, construction of buildings, the operation of Deseret Industries, storehouses, employment centers, social services agencies, the distribution of Church materials, and so forth. This does not include welfare production projects.

The management team in each of the five headquarters departments and the directors for temporal affairs are each responsible to prepare budgets, control activities, monitor performance, conform to legal and tax constraints, and most importantly, get the job done. We recognize this to be a significant responsibility.

Assist in planning

Second, we are to assist in planning through the area council. The strategic planning, while developed mutually by the ecclesiastical and temporal leaders, is directed by the executive administrator. The detailed work, sometimes referred to as tactical planning, is done chiefly by temporal personnel. This includes, but is not limited to, the securing of information appropriate to each department or function, calculating temporal assistance needs, forecasting printed material needs, pre-

paring cost projections, preparing temporal sections of Welfare Services master plans, and so forth.

Technical services

Third, we are to provide a broad range of technical services. Examples of such services include the design of meetinghouses, conducting operational audits on welfare farms, installing membership systems, and so forth.

Training

Fourth, we are to assist in training; where, when, and to what extent is determined in the area council. The training assistance available includes both the preparation of materials and the instruction in technical aspects of our services.

These responsibilities are to be performed at the lowest possible cost and in the most efficient manner possible. This is true regardless of the part of the world in which we are involved.

In several selected areas of the Church, our staff has been performing these functions. I have been grateful to observe that as temporal personnel properly perform their responsibilities, a heavy burden requiring much time and effort has been removed from the ecclesiastical leaders.

Example in Boise

An example of what has taken place is found in the Boise, Idaho, multiregion where the essential cooperative and coordinating process which forms the basis for the council concept has been operating for the past year. We have witnessed a dramatic increase in local welfare self-sufficiency. They have increased the number of locally grown products from seven to twenty-six, a threefold increase; they have increased the

number of locally canned products from three to eleven; and have almost eliminated the cash assessment. It has been reduced from \$76,000 to less than \$3,000. Furthermore, the 1980 plans call for producing eighteen additional items. This means they will be producing the forty-four basic food products contained on the bishop's order.

In addition, they anticipate significant increases in the integration of the flow of products between farms. For example, a dairy operation in the welfare program will buy its hay from another welfare farm which produced the hay. Over time, this means they will be selling fewer items on the open market and using more of what they produce within the storehouse resource system. All of this has happened because priesthood leaders in the Boise area caught the vision of what could be done and then developed a plan with the assistance of temporal officers. Plans were then carried out, resulting in substantial progress toward desired self-sufficiency.

President Benson has instructed us in the overall concept of these councils, which I need not repeat. However, an important difference between the organization of area councils in the United States and Canada with those organized in international areas should be emphasized. The Presiding Bishopric has not appointed directors for temporal affairs within the United States and Canada because circumstances do not require them. Therefore, headquarters functional departments which are decentralized, such as Welfare Services, or those who have heavy field activity, such as the Physical Facilities Department, will assign an area director or other individuals designated by the Presiding Bishopric and their managing directors to interface with the executive administrators. These individuals in the United States and Canada will have

the same duties and responsibilities pertaining to their functions as the director for temporal affairs has collectively in international areas.

Welfare services operations

In the United States and Canada, where we have extensive Welfare Services operations, it will require several weeks before all Welfare Services area directors are appointed. We ask, therefore, that all field staffs maintain their present reporting relationships and continue their present activities until each new organization is installed in conjunction with an area council meeting. Also at this meeting you will be informed as to how this change will affect your area and function.

Multiregion and region councils are organized to administer and correlate activities which involve more than one region or stake as well as to communicate and implement area council decisions. The organizational structure of multiregion and region councils is identical for the United States and Canada and all international areas.

An important difference between the area council and the multiregion/region councils is that membership at the multiregion and region levels is expanded to include the present Welfare Services councils or committees. This simply means that the chairman of the stake bishops' council and the designated stake Relief Society president will also attend council meetings as voting members whenever Welfare Services matters are discussed. Outside the United States and Canada, the director for temporal affairs will see that appropriate temporal representatives attend multiregion and region council meetings when agenda items relating to their particular functions are discussed.

To me, one of the most significant aspects of this council approach

is the opportunity for the establishment of priorities and plans for each area. As directed by the ecclesiastical line, each executive administrator will develop the priorities that meet the needs of his area. Much of what we as temporal officers do will be in response to these priorities. This is particularly true regarding the Welfare Services effort of the Church.

Over the years I have heard local leaders ask many times, "What should we be doing in our ward, our stake, our region? What aspects of welfare services should we be pursuing?" I am sure that every priesthood leader here has at one time or another asked himself these questions. This is particularly true of leaders whose stakes are not in the western United States where welfare work has been underway for over forty years.

Because of the magnitude of Welfare Services, particularly the operations of the storehouse resource system, it requires considerable study in order to be prepared to ask the Lord if our proposed plan is right and have him confirm its acceptability.

The First Presidency has counseled priesthood leaders to carefully and prayerfully develop a plan that will foster the local self-sufficiency of the Church. This is important in light of changing needs, rapid Church growth, the uncertainty of modern times, the obligation of the Church to care for its members in need, and the Lord's commandment to be independent. However, this must be done in an orderly way and on a timely basis.

As members of the General Welfare Services Committee visit with you at conference time and during visits to your areas through the world, we find an increasing desire on the part of local leaders to become involved in the broader aspects of Welfare Services. Indeed, we

sense that many leaders come to general conference and see Welfare Services operations here in the Mountain West in a very advanced stage and return home strongly motivated to duplicate what they have observed here. Without proper planning, this can lead to premature implementation, frustration, and even failure for both leaders and members.

Because we recognize that there are varying circumstances, such as diversity of needs, timeliness, and availability of resources, we have developed planning tools and a planning process to aid you in your efforts.

Basic planning

We believe there are two types of planning. They can best be described as first, basic planning and second, master planning.

Basic planning is rather informal and occurs primarily on the ward level. Each bishop does it as an integral and natural part of holding ward welfare services committee meetings. As its name suggests, it covers only the basics and includes organizing welfare services committees and councils, teaching gospel principles relating to welfare services, fostering personal and family preparedness, and assisting members from fast offering donations.

When an area or region is sufficiently mature and is prepared to set up a storehouse resource system, then more extensive and in-depth planning is required. This kind of planning is referred to as welfare services master planning.

Master planning

Welfare services master planning is the process of—

1. Developing a plan for teaching welfare services principles.
2. Identifying needs of the poor, needy, and distressed.

3. Programming Church resources to meet those needs.

When the master plan is fully implemented, there will exist within an area those elements of the storehouse resource system required to assist bishops in caring for the Lord's poor and distressed. (See D&C 52:40.)

The purposes of master planning can be achieved best through a phased approach. Phase one relates to strategic or "big picture" matters. The product of phase one planning is a description of Church welfare services in an area as it currently exists and what it eventually should and will become. Phase two relates to tactical or operational matters. The product of phase two will be a blueprint for the timely implementation of the storehouse resource system so that the area or zone may become self-sufficient.

Seven steps

There are seven steps in the master planning process. Through the area council, ecclesiastical and temporal officers are to—

1. Prepare and implement a formal area plan for teaching principles and programs.

2. Complete a needs and resources survey.

3. Review and adjust the bishop's stocklist.

4. Study local conditions and constraints—legal, tax, agricultural, etc.

5. Prepare a map showing ecclesiastical boundaries and proposed placement of facilities and projects.

6. Recommend needed projects, facilities, and services.

7. Submit the plan to the General Welfare Services Committee for approval.

While the process of master planning is not complicated, it does require some time and effort. We hope that under the guidance of your

respective executive administrators, each Regional Representative and stake president will respond to the need for welfare services master planning. Please recognize that the more completely you plan, the better we are jointly able to control the appropriate implementation of welfare services in your area. Our Welfare Services personnel stand ready to do their part. They have the forms, the experience, and the perspective which, coupled with your inspiration and insight into local needs, can produce a blueprint to guide welfare services implementation for years to come.

Now, may I give one example of both basic and master planning.

Some of you may recall a brief report I gave last October on the Church branch in Bermejillo, Mexico. With the help of welfare services missionaries, the branch president and his welfare services committee undertook some basic planning to apply the very basic welfare services program of the Church in their branch. Their work resulted in significant changes in the lives of Church members. They painted their homes, penned their livestock, and taught the essentials of personal and family preparedness, emphasizing good health practices.

The results today are that a chapel is under construction with most of the work being done by the members, including making their own bricks. President Rodolfo William Mortensen, the mission president, indicates that the branch is now a ward. Nearly every family has a garden; some even produce honey from bees. Most families have started a year's supply of food. Convert baptisms have increased sharply in the past year. All this has happened because Bishop Castaneda, a convert of eight years, had the vision of how to lead his people in living the gospel in Bermejillo. Basic planning, starting with the welfare of his members and

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reaching out to touch every facet of their lives, has lifted this ward to heights previously not thought possible.

Now may I turn to an example here in the United States where conditions are considerably different. The Georgia-Alabama multiregion undertook the seven-step process of master planning. After the plan was approved at headquarters, it was implemented through the Welfare Services director, his agents, and in concert with stake welfare services committees and the two region councils that comprise this multiregion. In the fifteen succeeding months, they have acquired twenty-three production projects. Previously they had none. They have raised funds for a storehouse which is presently under construction and should be open by late summer. An LDS Social Services office has also been opened. Bishops have been better trained in caring for the needy, and the Saints have felt a great upsurge of security by being a part of this effort. They all have less need to fear than they had fifteen months ago, for the Lord

said, "If ye are prepared ye shall not fear" (D&C 38:30).

As we witness what takes place when priesthood and temporal leaders first catch the vision of what the Lord expects, then, working in the proper councils, plan well, and then execute the plan, we see the fulfillment of the teachings of modern prophets as well as those of ancient times. May we go forth from this conference with a desire to "learn [our] duty, and . . . act in the office in which [we are] appointed, in all diligence" (D&C 107:99). I pray. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Brother Ripplinger will now lead us in singing, "We Thank Thee, O God, For A Prophet."

After the singing, Elder Bruce R. McConkie, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will address us.

The congregation sang, "We Thank Thee, O God, For A Prophet."

Elder Bruce R. McConkie

I stand before the Church this day and raise the warning voice. It is a prophetic voice, for I shall say only what the apostles and prophets have spoken concerning our day.

It is the voice of Jesus on the Mount of Olives, of John on the Isle of Patmos, of Joseph Smith during the mobbings and murders of Missouri. It is a voice calling upon the Lord's people to prepare for the troubles and desolations which are about to be poured out upon the world without measure.

Preparation for trials ahead

For the moment we live in a day of peace and prosperity but it shall not ever be thus. Great trials lie ahead. All of the sorrows and perils of the past are but a foretaste of what is yet to be. And we must prepare ourselves temporally and spiritually.

Our spiritual preparation consists in keeping the commandments of God, and taking the Holy Spirit for our guide, so that when this life is over we shall find rest and peace in

paradise and an ultimate inheritance of glory and honor in the celestial kingdom.

Our temporal preparation consists in using the good earth in the way the Lord designed and intended so as to supply all our just wants and needs. It is his purpose to provide for his Saints for all things are his, but, he says, it must needs be done in his own way. (See D&C 104:14-18.)

Caring for temporal needs

There is a common axiom among us which states: A religion that cannot save a man temporally does not have power to save him spiritually. If we cannot care for our temporal needs in this world, how can we ever succeed in spiritual things in the world to come?

Thus, speaking of temporal things—of lands and houses and crops, of work and sweat and toil, of the man Adam eating his bread in the sweat of his face (see Gen. 3:19)—the Lord says: "If you will that I give unto you a place in the celestial world, you must prepare yourselves by doing the things which I have commanded you and required of you" (D&C 78:7).

Then he commands both the Church and its members "to prepare and organize" their temporal affairs according to the law of his gospel, "that through my providence," saith the Lord, "notwithstanding the tribulation which shall descend upon you, that the church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world;

"That you may come up unto the crown prepared for you, and be made rulers over many kingdoms, saith the Lord God" (D&C 78:11, 14-15).

The Church, which administers the gospel, and the Saints who have received the gospel, must be independent of all the powers of earth, as they work out their salva-

tion—temporally and spiritually—with fear and trembling before the Lord!

Future tribulations

Be it remembered that tribulations lie ahead. There will be wars in one nation and kingdom after another until war is poured out upon all nations and two hundred million men of war mass their armaments at Armageddon.

Peace has been taken from the earth, the angels of destruction have begun their work, and their swords shall not be sheathed until the Prince of Peace comes to destroy the wicked and usher in the great Millennium.

There will be earthquakes and floods and famines. The waves of the sea shall heave themselves beyond their bounds, the clouds shall withhold their rain, and the crops of the earth shall wither and die.

There will be plagues and pestilence and disease and death. An overflowing scourge shall cover the earth and a desolating sickness shall sweep the land. Flies shall take hold of the inhabitants of the earth, and maggots shall come in upon them. (See D&C 29:14-20.) "Their flesh shall fall from off their bones, and their eyes from their sockets" (D&C 29:19).

Bands of Gadianton robbers will infest every nation, immorality and murder and crime will increase, and it will seem as though every man's hand is against his brother.

We need not dwell more upon these things. We are commanded to search the scriptures where they are recounted with force and fervor, and they shall surely come to pass.

A sad heresy

It is one of the sad heresies of our time that peace will be gained by weary diplomats as they prepare treaties of compromise, or that the

Millennium will be ushered in because men will learn to live in peace and to keep the commandments, or that the predicted plagues and promised desolations of latter days can in some way be avoided.

We must do all we can to proclaim peace, to avoid war, to heal disease, to prepare for natural disasters—but with it all, that which is to be shall be.

Knowing what we know, and having the light and understanding that has come to us, we must—as individuals and as a Church—use our talents, strengths, energies, abilities, and means to prepare for whatever may befall us and our children.

Independent of the world

We know that the world will go on in wickedness until the end of the world, which is the destruction of the wicked. We shall continue to live in the world, but with the Lord's help we shall not be of the world. We shall strive to overcome carnality and worldliness of every sort and shall invite all men to flee from Babylon, join with us, and live as becometh Saints.

As the Saints of the Most High we shall strive to “stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world” (D&C 78:14). Our only hope is to free ourselves from the bondage of sin, to rid ourselves from the chains of darkness, to rise above the world, to live godly and upright lives.

Relying always on the Lord, we must become independent of the world. We must be self-reliant. Using the agency God has given us, we must work out our own economic and temporal problems.

Work a law of life

We are here on earth to work—to work long, hard, arduous

hours, to work until our backs ache and our tired muscles knot, to work all our days. This mortal probation is one in which we are to eat our bread in the sweat of our faces until we return to the dust from whence we came.

Work is the law of life; it is the ruling principle in the lives of the Saints. We cannot, while physically able, voluntarily shift the burden of our own support to others. Doles abound in evils. Industry, thrift, and self-respect are essential to salvation.

We must maintain our own health, sow our own gardens, store our own food, educate and train ourselves to handle the daily affairs of life. No one else can work out our salvation for us, either temporally or spiritually.

We are here on earth to care for the needs of our family members. Wives have claim on their husbands for their support, children upon their parents, parents upon their children, brothers upon each other, and relatives upon their kin.

It is the aim of the Church to help the Saints to care for themselves and, where need be, to make food and clothing and other necessities available, lest the Saints turn to the doles and evils of Babylon. To help care for the poor among them the Church must operate farms, grow vineyards, run dairies, manage factories, and ten thousand other things—all in such a way as to be independent of the powers of evil in the world.

Watch and be ready

We do not know when the calamities and troubles of the last days will fall upon any of us as individuals or upon bodies of the Saints. The Lord deliberately withholds from us the day and hour of his coming and of the tribulations which shall precede it—all as part of the testing

and probationary experiences of mortality. He simply tells us to watch and be ready.

We can rest assured that if we have done all in our power to prepare for whatever lies ahead, he will then help us with whatever else we need.

He rained manna from heaven upon all Israel, six days each week for forty years, lest they perish for want of bread, but the manna ceased on the morrow after they ate of the parched corn of Canaan. Then they were required to supply their own food. (See Exod. 16:3-4, 35.)

During forty years in the wilderness the clothes worn by all Israel waxed not old and their shoes wore not out, but when they entered their promised land, then the Lord required them to provide their own wearing apparel. (See Deut. 29:5.)

When there was a famine in the land, at Elijah's word, a certain barrel of meal did not waste, and a certain cruse of oil did not fail, until the Lord sent again rain on the earth. And it is worthy of note, as Jesus said, that though there were many widows in Israel, unto one only was Elijah sent. (See 1 Kings 17:10-16.)

The course of obedience

We do not say that all of the Saints will be spared and saved from the coming day of desolation. But we do say there is no promise of safety and no promise of security except for those who love the Lord and who are seeking to do all that he commands.

It may be, for instance, that nothing except the power of faith and the authority of the priesthood can save individuals and congregations from the atomic holocausts that surely shall be.

And so we raise the warning voice and say: Take heed; prepare;

watch and be ready. There is no security in any course except the course of obedience and conformity and righteousness.

For thus saith the Lord: "The Lord's scourge shall pass over by night and by day, and the report thereof shall vex all people; yea, it shall not be stayed until the Lord come; . . .

"Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her," saith the Lord.

"But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire." (D&C 97:23, 25-26.)

Appeal for divine help

O God, our Father, wilt thou grant us peace and security and safety in the days of tribulation that shall come like a whirlwind upon all the earth.

Wilt thou hedge up the evil powers, and open up the way before us, thy people, that as individuals and as a Church we may stand independent of every creature beneath the celestial world.

And wilt thou enfold us everlastingly in the arms of thy love; and finally, wilt thou save us with an everlasting salvation in thy kingdom—for all of which we pray.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, will now speak to us.

President Marion G. Romney

The assignment that I have for this meeting is to talk about the fundamentals of church welfare. I am sure you understand the fundamentals better after hearing Brother McConkie's address.

Self-reliance

At the base of Church Welfare is the commandment that we are to live *by our own labors*.

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground," the Lord said to our first parents (Gen. 3:19).

As we sift the ways of the world, let us reject the commonly accepted attitude of expecting the government to supply us with the necessities of life. This practice, if fully adopted, will change any society from one of freedom to one of slavery. Let us contend for the gospel of work. Let us be self-reliant. Salvation is an individual matter. There will be no mass salvation. Some have mistakenly concluded from Paul's statement—"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works" (Eph. 2:8-9)—some have erroneously concluded from this statement that works are not necessary.

The truth was spoken by Nephi when he said, "We are saved [by grace], after all we can do" (2 Ne. 25:23).

It will require maximum effort for us to bring ourselves within the reach of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ so that we can be saved. There will be no government dole which can get us through the pearly gates. Nor will anyone go through those gates who wants to go through on the efforts of another.

The first principle of action in

Church Welfare is, therefore, for us to take care of ourselves as far as possible.

The second is to be so bound together as families that we shall sustain each other. Fathers and mothers are under a divine command to care for their children, and children have the responsibility to care for their parents.

When Church members cannot provide for themselves and are not cared for by their families, they are to be cared for pursuant to the third principle of Church Welfare, which is, by divine command, that the membership of the Church shall take care of them.

The Lord has made these principles binding upon the Saints in every gospel dispensation.

Now, I would like to repeat what you have heard a thousand times, more or less, about taking care of yourselves. You ought to now, more than at any previous time, make sure that you are prepared to go through a period of stress on the resources you have provided for yourselves. The necessity to do this may come any day. I hope it will not come too soon. In fact, I hope it doesn't come in my lifetime. But it will come sooner or later.

Never forget this matter of providing for yourselves, even though you don't hear as much about it now as you did a few years ago. Remember that it is still a fundamental principle, one that has been taught the Saints ever since they came to these valleys of the mountains. We have always been urged to provide ourselves, in the day of harvest, enough to last until the next harvest. Be sure that you do so now. Be prepared to take care of yourselves through a period of need.

I don't know how things will

work out. People say to me, "What will we do? If we have a year's supply and others do not, it will be gone in a day." Well, it will last as long as it lasts, but I'm not worried about that. If we will do what the Lord tells us to do, he will take care of us all right.

He told the Israelites to leave the land of Egypt, you remember, and they left. When they got to the Red Sea, Pharaoh's armies caught up with them. I suppose they were worried, wondering how they could escape from that army. They did not know, but the Lord knew. When the time came, he simply said to Moses, "Lift . . . up [your] rod" (Exod. 14:16). He did, and a dry-land passage through the Red Sea appeared, and they went through without the loss of a man. *They never would have been thus protected and saved if they had not been doing what the Lord directed them to do.*

Let us do what he has told us to do and then put our trust in him. He *can* take care of us, and in the day of need he will do so.

Fast offerings

One of the important things the Lord has told us to do is to be liberal in our payment of fast offerings. I would like you to know that there are great rewards for so doing—both spiritual and temporal rewards. The Lord says that the efficacy of our prayers depends upon our liberality to the poor. Way back in the days of Isaiah, he made this clear. When at that time the people complained, "Wherefore have we fasted . . . and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?" (Isa. 58:3), the Lord responded with this question:

"Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a

fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?" (Isa. 58:5.)

How like *our* performances. We are prone to get a headache when we fast, and sometimes we pretend to be starving to death. To ancient Israel the Lord put the question:

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? . . .

" . . . to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him. . . ?

"[When thou hast done these things]," he added, "then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.

"Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. . . .

" . . . if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday." (Isa. 58:6-10.)

Think of these matchless blessings. They are all promised to those who will liberally contribute to the care of the poor.

"And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Isa. 58:11).

According to the teachings of the great Book of Mormon prophet, Amulek, the very efficacy of one's prayers turns upon his liberality in caring for the poor. This great prophet was a missionary companion of Alma. One of the greatest sermons in the Book of Mormon is the one preached by him as recorded in the thirty-fourth chapter of Alma. Having first explained to his hearers the atonement of Christ, he continued, "Therefore may God grant unto you, my brethren, that ye may begin to

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exercise your faith unto repentance, that ye begin to call upon his holy name, that he would have mercy upon you" (Al. 34:17).

Prayer

He then gave these classic instructions on prayer:

"Cry unto him in your houses, yea, over all your household, both morning, mid-day, and evening. . . .

"Yea, cry unto him against the devil, who is an enemy to all righteousness.

"Cry unto him over the crops of your fields, that ye may prosper in them. . . .

"But this is not all; ye must pour out your souls in your closets, and your secret places, and in your wilderness.

"Yea, and when you do not cry unto the Lord, let your hearts be full, drawn out in prayer unto him continually for your welfare, and also for the welfare of those who are around you." (Al. 34:21, 23-24, 26-27.)

Care for the poor

Now one, it might seem, would be justified in thinking that people who prayed in this manner would be pretty good people. But Amulek added another qualification:

"And now behold, my beloved brethren, I say unto you, do not suppose that this is all; for after ye have done all these things, if ye turn away the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick and afflicted, and impart of your substance, if ye have, to those who stand in need—I say unto you, if ye do not any of these things, behold, your prayer is vain, and availeth you nothing, and ye are as hypocrites who do deny the faith.

"Therefore, if ye do not remember to be charitable, ye are as dross, which the refiners do cast out, (it being of no worth) and is trodden under foot of men." (Al. 34:28-29.)

Is it not astonishing that such tremendous consequences attach to liberality in caring for the poor? If you think we will not be bound by these scriptures in the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon, consider this one from the Doctrine and Covenants.

I am going to read you a few verses from the one hundred and fourth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, but before I do so, I shall tell you what's in them. I understand from them that the Lord claims the earth as his, that it is not yours and mine to own and manage independently of him. No matter how many stocks and bonds or how much land and other properties we possess, they are not wholly ours. They are the Lord's. He further says that he owns and gives to us all the blessings we have and that he makes us stewards over them, responsible to him. He makes it clear that it is his purpose to provide for his Saints, but he requires that it be done in his way, which way, he explains, is for those who *have* to contribute to those who *have not*. Having made us stewards, he gives us our agency, however, and then lays down the condition that if we accept these blessings and refuse to contribute our share for the care of the poor, we shall go to—well, he tells us where we shall go. I shall now read to you from the revelation:

"It is expedient that I, the Lord, should make every man accountable, as a steward over earthly blessings, which I have made and prepared for my creatures.

"I, the Lord, stretched out the heavens, and built the earth, my very handiwork; and all things therein are mine.

"And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine.

"But it must needs be done in mine own way; and behold this is the way that I, the Lord, have decreed to

provide for my saints, that the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low.

"For the earth is full, and there is enough.

This theory that we should limit our posterity because we can't feed them is not in harmony with the Lord's statement.

"For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves.

"Therefore, if any man shall take of the abundance which I have made, and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the poor and the needy, he shall, with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment." (D&C 104:13-18.)

The revelation from which this is taken was given in this dispensation for our guidance. In light of it, do you think that this matter of taking care of the poor is one that we can disregard and still obtain the blessings of the Lord? Not at all. We obey it, or we pay the penalty.

I suppose that I need not say more at this time about the principles and significance of Church Welfare. I do, however, desire to say a few things about the responsibility of us priesthood leaders for their implementation.

Implementation

You have had explained to you this morning some simple concepts with regard to priesthood councils. There is nothing new in this, only that their application has been expanded above the stake level and below the general level. For years I have had the privilege of traveling throughout the Church and meeting with stake presidents in regional welfare meetings. I know how important it is for you to meet and conduct business at the region and multi-

region levels. We have formalized this morning something that many of us in welfare have done for years. But while we have been at this welfare business for quite some time, there is still much to do. Therefore, I would like to suggest how these region, multiregion, and area councils are to build the welfare work.

Let me begin by explaining that while many programs have been assigned by the First Presidency to either the ecclesiastical or temporal lines, Welfare Services is among the affairs not assigned to either of these two lines exclusively.

The administration of these services is directed by the General Welfare Services Committee of the Church, composed of the First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve, Presiding Bishopric, the members of the General Relief Society Presidency, and the managing director of Welfare Services. Because of the similarity of Welfare Services work to the work done through the temporal arm under the direction of the Presiding Bishopric, the Welfare Services Department reports to the General Welfare Services Committee through the Presiding Bishopric. However, it serves as a resource to the ecclesiastical and the temporal lines, both of which play a significant role in welfare services.

The Role of the Executive Administrator

We look to you General Authority executive administrators to provide the inspiration, planning, and regulation within policy that will ensure that Welfare Services receives full emphasis within your respective areas. You must also train your Regional Representatives in Welfare Services principles and practices. This you can best do by drawing on the resources of the Presiding Bishopric and the Welfare Services Department. They are assigned to work

with you at every council level as shown here this morning.

By following the directives given you by the Quorum of the Twelve and the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, we anticipate a great upsurge of welfare accomplishments in all areas presided over by the executive administrators.

The Role of the Regional Representative

You Regional Representatives have the awesome responsibility to teach and provide the impetus for the implementation of the Welfare Services program.

You will receive guidance for teaching the principles and doctrines of Church Welfare Services through the ecclesiastical line, especially from your executive administrator. Although you are not responsible for operations, your cooperation with region and multiregion Welfare Services personnel is essential.

With the convening of your first official region council meeting, you become the chairman of Welfare Services in your region. In concert with the Welfare Services region agent, you are to implement welfare work as directed by the executive administrator. You will find great spiritual satisfaction as you serve in this capacity.

May I emphasize that the position you occupy in the implementation of Church Welfare Services is vital and critical. Your performance in this matter can make or break the Welfare Services program in the stake units you are responsible for.

Stake presidents and bishops have long had the major responsibility in teaching basic welfare principles and implementing them in their wards and stakes. Their work should be greatly enhanced through the new organizational structure introduced here this morning. From your bishops particularly, we look for great strides in this work in the months and years ahead.

That we may all vigorously pursue our duties in living and in implementing the Church Welfare Services program, I humbly pray. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Our beloved Prophet and President, President Spencer W. Kimball will be our concluding speaker. We will then sing, "Let Us All Press On," and the benediction will be offered by Elder Rex C. Reeve, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and supervisor of the British Isles-South Africa area.

President Spencer W. Kimball

My beloved brothers and sisters, what sweetness fills the soul at conference time. How grateful I am to share the spirit of this hour with you, to feel your spirit and strength, and to recognize your work and your accomplishments.

In the decade of the seventies, we have seen great strides in the growth of the Church. The Lord continues to bless his Church, and this growth will accelerate in the future. It is primarily in response to this growth that we have expanded priest-

hood councils to the area and region levels as explained by the Brethren here this morning.

Provision for change and growth

The Lord, through revelation has made provision in the priesthood structure of the Church to accommodate for change and growth. You have been well instructed, enough so I do not need to review the details of this important step forward. However, I would like to share with you an incident in Church history which has application to today's proceedings:

"This afternoon the Twelve met in council, and had a time of general confession. . . . The time when we are about to separate is near; and when we shall meet again, God only knows; we therefore feel to ask of him whom we have acknowledged to be our Prophet and Seer, that he inquire of God for us, and obtain a revelation, (if consistent) that we may look upon it when we are separated, that our hearts may be comforted. . . . even a great revelation, that will enlarge our hearts, comfort us in adversity, and brighten our hopes amidst the powers of darkness." (*History of The Church*, 2:209-10.)

It was in compliance with this request that the Prophet Joseph inquired of the Lord and received what we have as section 107 of the Doctrine and Covenants, from which I quote:

"The Twelve are a Traveling Presiding High Council, to officiate in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Presidency of the Church, agreeable to the institution of heaven; to build up the church, and regulate all the affairs of the same in all nations, first unto the Gentiles and secondly unto the Jews.

"The Seventy are to act in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Twelve or the traveling high

council, in building up the church and regulating all the affairs of the same in all nations, first unto the Gentiles and then to the Jews." (D&C 107:33-34.)

We see that the Twelve Apostles officiate in the name of the Lord under the direction of the First Presidency of the Church, and the Seventy act in their office under the direction of the Twelve. Provision is also made, in this revelation, for Regional Representatives and others as the work of the ministry may require:

"Whereas other officers of the church, who belong not unto the Twelve, neither to the Seventy, are not under the responsibility to travel among all nations, but are to travel as their circumstances shall allow, notwithstanding they may hold as high and responsible offices in the church" (D&C 107:98).

Temporal work of kingdom

In order that the priesthood administration of his church might be complete, the Lord has set forth how "to manage . . . all things pertaining to the [presiding] bishopric" and the manner in which the temporal work of the kingdom is to be accomplished (D&C 82:12). Again from section 107 I quote the following:

"The office of a bishop is in administering all temporal things; . . .

"Nevertheless, a high priest, that is, after the order of Melchizedek, may be set apart unto the ministering of temporal things, having a knowledge of them by the Spirit of truth;

"And also to be a judge in Israel, to do the business of the church" (D&C 107:68, 71-72).

We have seen in the last several years a more complete application of these revealed instructions. Today we should even more clearly understand how they are to be applied in building up the Church in all nations.

Events in the world may make this approach to managing the affairs of the kingdom not only practical but a necessity in the years ahead.

As the kingdom thus functions, these wonderful men of the Quorum of the Twelve can go about the Church and set things in order as is necessary, but be relieved of their assignments to manage programs and departments as they once did. The work of managing and directing our various departments and programs is now the work of our General Authorities in the First Quorum of the Seventy, and they have the willing and capable support of the Presiding Bishopric and our temporal departments—all to the end that we can move forward in unity and at a pace never before known.

Facilitating the work

It should be understood, brothers and sisters, that the establishment of these region and area priesthood councils is primarily for the purpose of facilitating the work of the Church in stakes, wards, and especially in our families.

We hope you wonderful stake presidents realize that part of the reason for this step is to lift some of the load from your shoulders. These responsibilities will now largely be shifted to our Regional Representatives so that you can give full attention to the affairs of your own stake. Recognizing this, I would like to speak somewhat on the duties and the privileges of stake presidents as they preside over and conduct the activities of the Church, including the welfare services.

Observing labors of father

My first impressions of the labor of a stake president came from observing my own father, Andrew Kimball. Father served from 1898 to 1924 as president of the St. Joseph

Stake of Zion for twenty-six and a half years. This stake was named in honor of the martyred prophet. Though we as a family lived modestly, Father seemed to find a way not only to teach bishops how to care for the very poor, but on many occasions found it in his heart to help many a downtrodden soul himself. I believe that father so ministered to his people that he fulfilled a blessing given him by President Joseph F. Smith, who promised that the people of the Gila Valley would "seek unto him as children to a parent." Although I am sure I did not then fully appreciate his example, the standard he set was one worthy of any stake president.

My father practiced what he preached. He didn't just tell others to be self-reliant; we were taught to exemplify it as a family. We raised almost all of our own food. He always wanted a garden—he wanted a garden to eat from and a garden to smell. I used to pump the water by hand to water the garden, and also I learned to milk the cows, prune the fruit trees, mend the fences, and all the rest. I had two older brothers, who, I was convinced, took all the easy jobs and left me all the hard ones. But I don't complain; it made me strong.

Service as stake president

I, too, had the privilege of serving as a stake president. I served as the first president of the Mt. Graham Stake, formed in 1938 from parts of the St. Joseph Stake. Like all of you presidents, I have experienced the sadness as well as the joy of laboring with those in difficulty.

I well remember the flood of September 1941. It rained continually the weekend of stake conference. The day after stake conference the Gila River overflowed its channel and swept through Duncan, Arizona, and environs. After consulting with my first counselor, Vernon McGrath,

regarding the Saints' immediate needs, I loaded my car with goods from the interstake welfare storehouse in Safford and drove the forty miles to Duncan. Arranging matters as best we could there, I walked the eight miles to Virden because bridges were unsafe for cars. I was filled with grief as I viewed the devastation of the houses and the farmland. Yet, in the ensuing weeks, I shared in perhaps the most fulfilling experience of my tenure as stake president. Through the high council and ward bishoprics, we organized for reconstruction. From welfare supplies and local labor we reestablished the people on the land. The contributions of the Saints throughout the area were wonderful, and, as I recall, we did not have to call on the General Welfare Committee for help. We handled it all locally ourselves.

During this same period, I remember vigorously counseling the people to be self-reliant and to avoid debt. The Great Depression had not fully run its course when I was installed. Although we did not then refer to it as personal and family preparedness, we taught the Saints of our stake to care for their own needs. In one way or another, we gave expression to the basic principles of work, self-reliance, love, service, consecration, and stewardship.

The firsthand experience of those days caused me to contemplate with great pleasure the progress the Church has achieved since welfare services were reemphasized in 1936.

Implementing Welfare Services today

From these experiences, coupled with observations of the needs of our people at this time, I should like to share with you what I would do today in welfare services if I were now serving as a stake president.

First, I would *learn* the program. I would study the scriptures,

handbooks, and materials relating to welfare. I would come to understand that Welfare Services is nothing more nor less than "the gospel in action."

We think of welfare services as consisting of three parts: first, *prevention of problems* through provident living. This applies to every member. Second, *temporary assistance* for those with immediate needs, and third, *rehabilitation* for those with deep or long-lasting problems.

I well remember coming to conference as a stake president in the early forties and hearing President Clark's discourse on these aspects. They are just as true today as they were then.

It would be important for me to learn my duties as chairman of the stake welfare services committee and as an active member of my region welfare services council. In this respect it is important to recognize, brethren, that some welfare services activities must occur at the region and multiregion level. Even though it would be convenient to have all the facilities located in my own stake, I would be supportive of decisions made by the region council that might place these in another stake.

Most of us learn best what we apply in our own lives. I hope I would not be found wanting in applying basic gospel principles in my life, in my own home, with my own family. I would live the precepts of personal and family preparedness. That means having a garden, wisely managing family resources, and expanding my educational horizons. It means staying fit, replenishing the family year's supply, fixing up our property, and all the rest we have been asked of the Lord to do.

I remember another example my father set for the community as the local stake president. He always tried to keep our home and yard clean and neat. It just had to be that way. Once an old cowpuncher who lived in Saf-

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First Day

ford—when I was called to Salt Lake to be an Apostle—came in to see me and said, “Well, Spencer, you know, I always used to pass your place as we went to meetings, and if it was clean, then I knew conference was on. If it wasn’t clean, it was something else.”

I would also, brethren, learn to give of my means to the welfare effort. I would pay a generous fast offering and respond happily as a quorum member to welfare assignments.

Second, having learned everything I could, I would *teach* my ward and stake officers the principles and practices of Welfare Services. This includes instructing them in gospel principles, duties, and specific assignments. With my counselors, I would teach bishops to “[search] after the poor to administer to their wants by humbling the rich and the proud” as the scriptures teach (D&C 84:112).

We would reason with them from the scriptures and teach them the law of the fast, the use of the storehouse, the basis of determining individuals’ needs, the types of service or work to be rendered for assistance received, and how to counsel those with personal problems. We must always remember that the bishop has the sole mandate to actually minister to the needy.

We would teach the stake Relief Society sisters to train their ward sisters in such things as how to make home visits in support of the bishop. We would instruct quorum leaders regarding meaningful home teaching, fostering personal and family preparedness, and helping brethren with critical problems.

Third, I would *implement* Welfare Services as best my stake could. It is in the doing that the real blessing comes. *Do it!* That’s our motto. After what we have heard this morning, maybe we should change that to: Do it with a plan! But after we have

the plan—probably one for the whole area—then we must implement it and get the job done.

Opportunities for service

There are so many opportunities for service, so many needs to be met. Implementing means Deseret Industries drives, growing commodities, and finding employment through the quorums. It means collecting fast offerings. It means finding foster homes for our Lamanite brothers and sisters. It means giving of self. It means helping each other.

After all, this great plan is to bless both giver and receiver, the *givers* knowing that “inasmuch as ye do it unto the least of these, ye [have done] it unto me” (D&C 42:38), and the *receiver* knowing that the Lord makes good his promise “to provide for my saints, for all things are mine” (D&C 104:15).

Help in Chinese famine

The Church has always been concerned for all the Lord’s children. I recall an intense famine in China in 1907. A resolution was presented to the general conference by President John R. Winder to send twenty tons of flour to the suffering people. Brother B. H. Roberts seconded the resolution with these remarks:

“No calamity can fall upon any of our Father’s children but what our hearts go out in sympathy to them. I trust also that this movement, which I believe will be unanimously endorsed by this conference, may bear witness to the wisdom that exists in our methods of collecting means for charitable and religious purposes. Thank God, there is an institution in the earth whose charities are constantly accumulating, that in the very moment of need there is a means of ministering unto the children of men—a circumstance that speaks loudly for the divine wisdom that has

made these provisions in the Church of Christ. With all my heart I second the resolution of President Winder." (In Conference Report, Apr. 1907, p. 59.)

The resolution was adopted by unanimous vote of the congregation.

I thought of the story recently when we authorized the building of more granaries around the United States and Canada. I think of it today as we remind each leader of his duty to implement the welfare program of the Church.

As I said, it is in the doing, in the implementing of the work, that the real blessings come. How pleased I am with the progress we are making. And while we ask much of you and will continue to ask you to build, improve, function, and lengthen your stride in your particular stewardship, I would like to recognize and publicly express appreciation for your excellent services.

Indian placement program

We wish to extend our love and appreciation to all those who have provided service and sacrifice in the Indian student placement program. To you wonderful Indian parents, we give our love. We know of your sacrifice in allowing your children the opportunity for a good education away from home and access to the full Church program. We know how your love will bless the lives of your children and strengthen your entire family. To you foster parents who give of your life, your time, and your means, we offer our deepest appreciation. We know your participation requires love and a little extra to provide for these Lamanite youth. We also know that many blessings come to you and your family as you demonstrate this love and unselfishness for others. Both foster families and Indian families benefit from the experience. The placement program was inspired of the Lord. We have

watched many of our Lamanite youth become strong leaders in the Church, and many have taken their place as leaders in their communities and in the world.

We encourage bishops to continue their work in this important and official program of the Church. Seek out Lamanite youth who will benefit from the program and help them blossom as the rose. Stake presidents, guide your bishops in this effort, too.

Welfare farm properties

We congratulate those who take pride in operating efficiently, economically, and safely, who have cleaned up and fixed up their welfare farm properties. A welfare farm provides a great opportunity for a stake president to teach stewardship principles. The limiting factor on many farms is priesthood leadership. We thank those stake presidents who have organized their farm committee, who have delegated efficiently, who hold regular accountability interviews.

We wish to recognize those who have caught the vision of quality. Nothing is too good for the Lord. Isn't it wonderful that we could serve the Lord what we produce from our own welfare farms?

New storehouses

We are glad to receive reports regarding the construction of new storehouses, canneries, and Desert Industries buildings. We know this is done at considerable sacrifice. But when we have sufficient strength, it is approved by those appointed to this work. It is the desire of the Lord that we have these storehouses—it is through them we are to care for the poor and the needy.

Here is what the Lord counseled the first Presiding Bishop of the Church:

"And again, let the bishop appoint a storehouse unto this church; and let all things both in money and in meat, which are more than is needful for the wants of this people, be kept in the hands of the bishop. . . .

"And thus I grant unto this people a privilege of organizing themselves according to my laws. . . .

"Behold, this shall be an example unto my servant Edward Partridge, in other places, in all churches." (D&C 51:13, 15, 18.)

The Lord still permits us today to follow his divine pattern. Our own Bishop Brown is responsible to follow this "example . . . in all churches" as circumstances permit. To those of you who are thus engaged, we express our love and appreciation.

The Lord's work

May I conclude by once again reminding us that we are not about *our* work or *any* work but the *Lord's* work. We are building his kingdom. We are privileged to be members thereof. As such we are under obli-

gation to the dictates of the Lord given in the one hundred and fifth section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

"And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom; otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself.

"And my people must needs be chastened until they learn obedience, if it must needs be, by the things which they suffer. . . .

". . . Therefore, let us become subject unto her laws." (D&C 105:5-6, 32.)

Again we express to all of you here our deep gratitude for all that is being done.

I know that God lives, I know this is his work, and I ask him to continue to bless us with inspiration and judgment. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The congregation sang the hymn, "Let Us All Press On."

Elder Rex C. Reeve offered the benediction.

SALT LAKE TABERNACLE CHOIR AND ORGAN BROADCAST

The following broadcast, announced by J. Spencer Kinard, and originating with Station KSL, Salt Lake City, Utah, was presented from 9:30 to 10:00 A.M. on Sunday, April 1, 1979, through the courtesy of the Columbia Broadcasting System's network throughout the United States, parts of Canada, and through other facilities to several points overseas:

you within these walls with Music and the Spoken Word from the Crossroads of the West.

CBS and its affiliated stations bring you at this hour the Mormon Tabernacle Choir from Temple Square in Salt Lake City, with Jerold Ottley conducting the Choir, John Longhurst, Tabernacle Organist, and the Spoken Word by Spencer Kinard.

Announcer: Once more we welcome

Announcer: From the pen of Robert

Browning, the Men's Chorus begins today's broadcast with the sounds and thoughts of Spring.

(Choir: "The Year's at the Spring")—Beach

Announcer: We next hear the Choir sing a text from Isaiah, "Zion Speaks: I Am By God Forsaken," by Johann Schein.

(Choir: "Zion Speaks: I Am By God Forsaken")—Schein

Announcer: From the book of Psalms, the Choir now sings, "I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes Unto The Hills," with music by Leo Sowerby.

(Choir: "I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes")—Sowerby

Announcer: The words of William Cullen Bryant were the inspiration for this next composition by Robert Cundick: ". . . May they who err be guided here to find the better way . . . May faith grow firm and love grow warm and pure devotion rise."

(Choir: "Thou, Whose Unmeasured Temple Stands")—Cundick

The Spoken Word

Hero! There's a word which conjures up many thoughts. Hero! Its mention brings to mind the illustrious figures we honor in our history books, on our monuments, and in the words of our ballads.

But there are heroes whose names will never reach the history books; quiet, unassuming, unsung heroes whose deeds also deserve our praise and admiration. They are the devoted parents of the world.

The faithful father who accepts the responsibility of providing for his family; who uses days off for painting and repairing everything from broken toys to broken toasters; who spends his fishing trips baiting hooks and untangling lines; who gives direction, strength and comfort to his family; who teaches

through word and deed what it means to be loyal and honest.

The courageous mother who enters the valley of the shadow of death to bear each child; who instills in the members of her family the desire to succeed, to learn, to grow, to develop their talents; and who often lets her own needs go wanting in order to meet the awesome responsibilities of parenthood.

These are the heroes of the world. The unfaltering acts of kindness and loyalty offered by mothers and fathers through long seasons are as valiant and as important as any deed enacted on the most heroic of battlefields.

To provide well for one's family, to perform faithfully the simple routines of life despite stress and discouragement, to sacrifice time and energy for the benefit and development of children, to lose one's life in the service of household and family without recognition or fanfare—these daily acts of courage and devotion make up the essence of true heroism.

Oh yes, there are the heroes of history and legend who merit our esteem. But we also wish to honor these domestic, unsung heroes whose unselfish dedication to parenthood insures the continuation and progress of humankind. These mothers and fathers—more specifically these devoted parents—they are the true heroes of our times. They are the ones who deserve our greatest acclaim.

(Choir: without announcement "With a Voice of Singing")—Shaw

Announcer: The Choir has just sung Martin Shaw's anthem, "With a Voice of Singing."

John Longhurst at the Tabernacle Organ plays "Consolation in D Flat," by Franz Liszt.

(Organ: "Consolation in D Flat")—Liszt

Announcer: Music is a powerful force which touches our deepest emotions

and innermost thoughts. With a feeling of appreciation the Choir closes today's broadcast with Eugene Butler's "Ode to Music."

(Choir: "Ode to Music")—Butler

Announcer: Again we leave you from within the shadows of the everlasting hills. May peace be with you this day . . . and always.

Announcer: This concludes the two thousand five hundred eighty-ninth performance continuing the 50th year

of this traditional broadcast from the Tabernacle on Temple Square brought to you by CBS and its affiliated stations, originating with Station KSL in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Jerold Ottley conducted the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, John Longhurst was at the Organ, the Spoken Word by Spencer Kinard.

In another seven days at this same hour, Music and the Spoken Word will be heard again from the Crossroads of the West.

This is the CBS Radio Network.

SUMMARY OF CONFERENCE MUSIC

The Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir furnished the choral numbers for the Saturday morning, Sunday morning, and Sunday afternoon sessions of the Conference, with Jerold D. Ottley, and Donald H. Ripplinger, conducting.

A combined chorus from Brigham Young University provided the music for the Saturday afternoon session, under the direction of Ralph Woodward.

At the General Priesthood Meet-

ing, a combined chorus from the Tabernacle Choir and Mormon Youth Chorus furnished the music, directed by Robert C. Bowden, and Donald H. Ripplinger.

Prelude, postlude, and interlude music, and accompaniments on the Tabernacle organ throughout the conference sessions, were played by Robert Cundick, Roy Darley, or John Longhurst, Tabernacle Organists.

FRANCIS M. GIBBONS

Clerk of the Conference

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